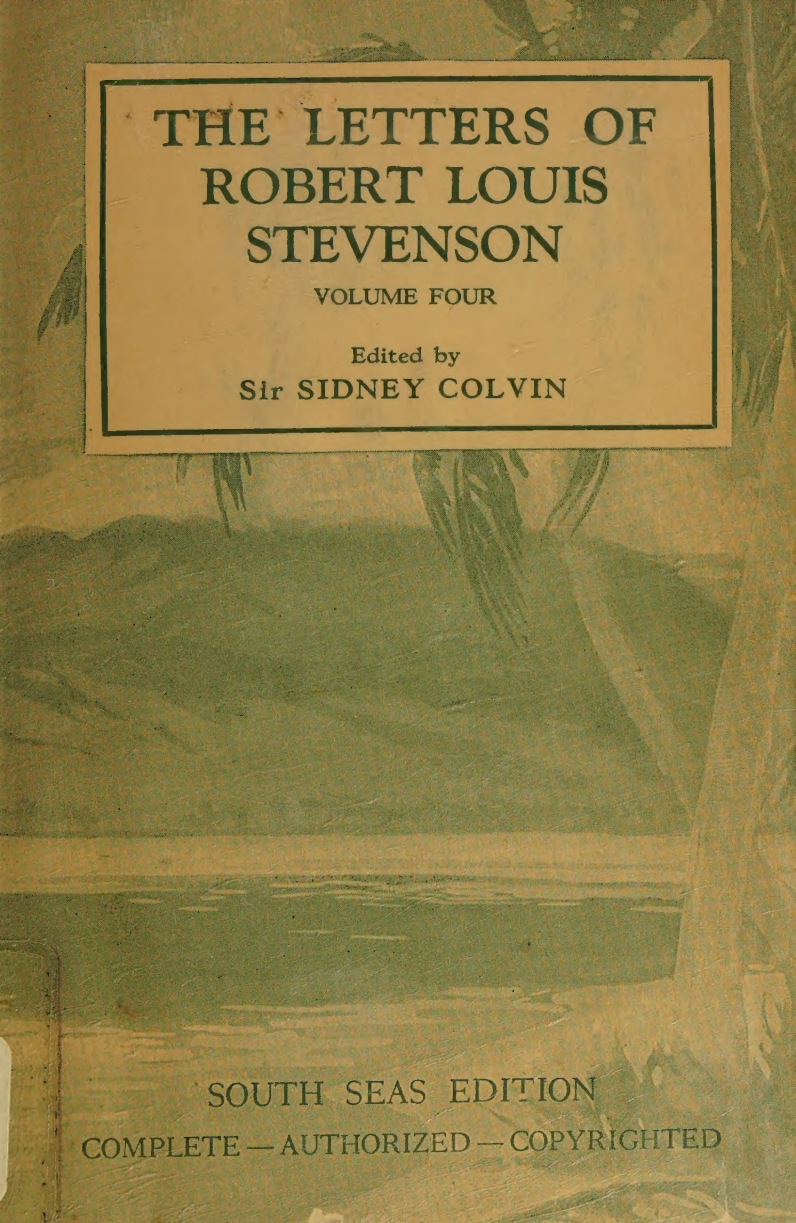
THE LETTERS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

VOLUME FOUR

Edited by

Sir SIDNEY COLVIN



SOUTH SEAS EDITION

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READERS who like letters—and their number is legion — readers who like Stevenson, will wish to have within reach a collection that in our language stands unsurpassed for charm and for sincerity. They have the informality of conversation. They are as an open book, revealing the heart of a writer devoted to his art, a true friend who attracts by the genuineness of his friendship, and an untiring sharer in the joys and griefs of a world that never loses its power to interest and to fascinate.

"IN MEMORIAM - J. O. ALLEN"

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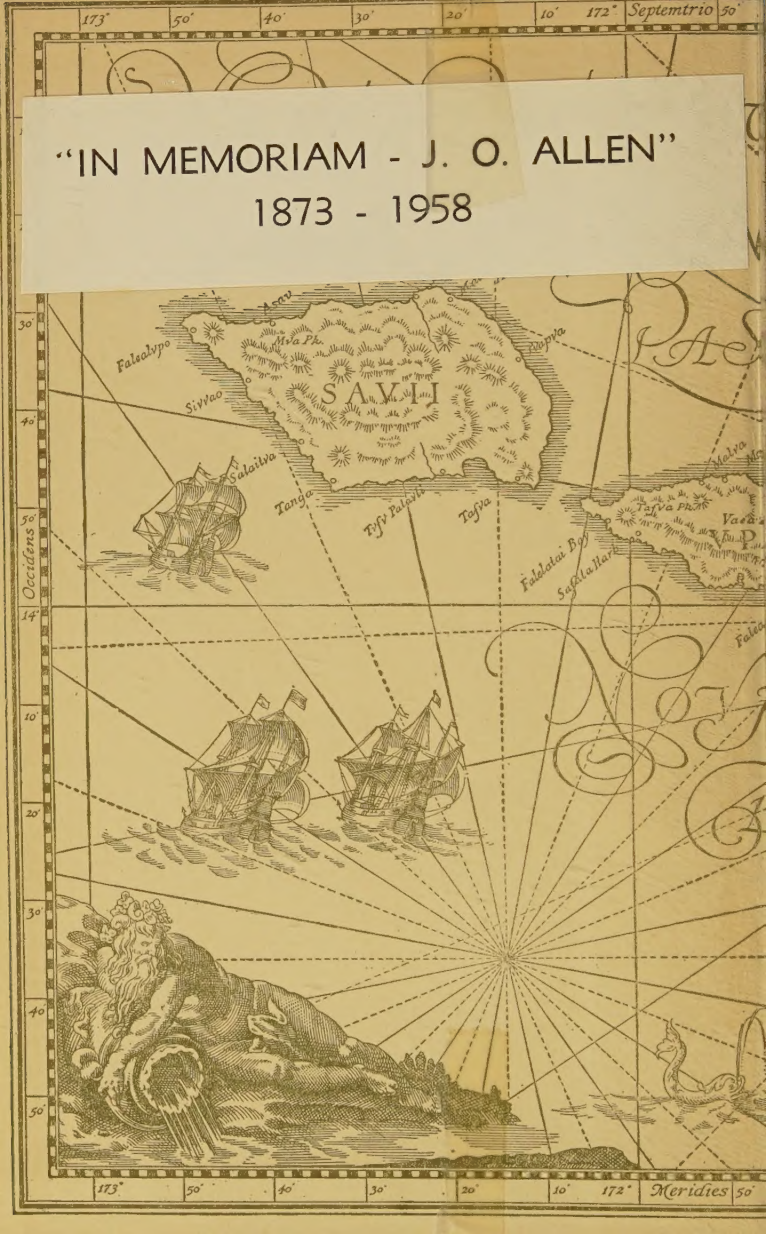

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THE WORKS OF
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

SOUTH SEAS EDITION

VOLUME XXXII

THE LETTERS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

VOLUME FOUR

EDITED BY

SIR SIDNEY COLVIN

NEW YORK

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

1925

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CONTENTS

XII.—LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

SECOND YEAR AT VAILIMA

	PAGE
Introductory Note by Sir Sidney Colvin	3
Letters—*Continued*	
To E. L. Burlingame	5
To Miss Adelaide Boodle	6
To Sidney Colvin	10
To J. M. Barrie	13
To Sidney Colvin	14
To William Morris	21
To Mrs. Charles Fairchild	22
To Sidney Colvin	25
To E. L. Burlingame	32
To the Rev. S. J. Whitmee	33
To Charles Baxter	35
To Sidney Colvin	37
To the Same	52
To T. W. Dover	68
To E. L. Burlingame	69
To Sidney Colvin	70
To Rev. R. Wardlaw Thompson	72
To Charles Baxter	73
To W. E. Henley	74
To E. L. Burlingame	75
To Andrew Lang	76
To Miss Adelaide Boodle	78
To the Countess of Jersey	81
To the Same	83
To Sidney Colvin	83
To the Same	90
To Mrs. Charles Fairchild	101
To the Children in the Cellar	103

45390

LETTERS—*Continued* PAGE

To Sidney Colvin 109
To Gordon Browne 113
To Miss Morse 114
To Miss Taylor 115
To E. L. Burlingame 118
To Sidney Colvin 119
To J. M. Barrie 125
To E. L. Burlingame 127
To Austin Strong 128
To the Same 130
To Lieutenant Eeles 133
To Sidney Colvin 136
To Charles Baxter 138
To Mrs. Fleeming Jenkin 139
To Henry James 140
To J. M. Barrie 142
To Baron Senfft von Pilsach 144
To Charles Baxter 145

XIII—LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

THIRD YEAR AT VAILIMA

LETTERS—

To Sidney Colvin 152
To Austin Strong 157
To Charles Baxter 160
To Sidney Colvin 161
To the Same 163
To Charles Baxter 164
To Sidney Colvin 165
To A. Conan Doyle 170
To Sidney Colvin 171
To S. R. Crockett 177
To Augustus St. Gaudens 180
To Sidney Colvin 182
To Edmund Gosse 188
To Mrs. R. L. Stevenson 192

CONTENTS

LETTERS—*Continued* PAGE

To Henry James 192
To Austin Strong 196
To the Same 199
To the Same 201
To the Same 204
To Sidney Colvin 207
To James S. Stevenson 217
To Henry James 218
To A. Conan Doyle 219
To Charles Baxter 220
To Sidney Colvin 221
To A. Conan Doyle 222
To Augustus St. Gaudens 224
To James S. Stevenson 225
To George Meredith 226
To Charles Baxter 228
To Sidney Colvin 229
To the Same 235
To J. Horne Stevenson 240
To John P——n 241
To Russell P——n 242
To Alison Cunningham 242
To Charles Baxter 243
To J. M. Barrie 245
To R. Le Gallienne 247
To Mrs. A. Baker 248
To Henry James 249
To Sidney Colvin 250

XIV—LIFE IN SAMOA—*Concluded*

FOURTH YEAR AT VAILIMA—THE END

INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY SIR SIDNEY COLVIN 257

LETTERS—*Concluded*—

To Charles Baxter 260
To H. B. Baildon 261
To W. H. Low 262

CONTENTS

LETTERS—*Concluded*— PAGE

To Sidney Colvin 264
To H. B. Baildon 265
To Sidney Colvin 266
To J. H. Bates 268
To William Archer 268
To Sidney Colvin 270
To W. B. Yeats 274
To George Meredith 274
To Charles Baxter 276
To Mrs. Sitwell 277
To Charles Baxter 278
To Sidney Colvin 280
To R. A. M. Stevenson 282
To Sidney Colvin 288
To Henry James 290
To Marcel Schwob 293
To Augustus St. Gaudens 294
To Miss Adelaide Boodle 294
To Mrs. A. Baker 297
To Sidney Colvin 298
To J. M. Barrie 300
To Sidney Colvin 306
To Dr. Bakewell 309
To James Payn 309
To Miss Middleton 312
To A. Conan Doyle 313
To Sidney Colvin 314
To Charles Baxter 317
To R. A. M. Stevenson 318
To Sir Herbert Maxwell 324
To Sidney Colvin 325
To Alison Cunningham 329
To James Payn 330
To Sidney Colvin 332
To Professor Meiklejohn 334
To Lieutenant Eeles 336
To Sir Herbert Maxwell 337
To Andrew Lang 337
To Edmund Gosse 338

CONTENTS

PAGE

APPENDIX I—

Account of the Death and Burial of R. L. Stevenson, by Lloyd Osbourne 341

APPENDIX II—

Address of R. L. Stevenson to the Chiefs, on the Opening of the Road of Gratitude, October, 1894 346

INDEX TO THE LETTERS: VOLUMES XXIX-XXXII

INDEX OF TITLES IN VOLUMES I-XXVIII

XII

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

SECOND YEAR AT VAILIMA

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1892

THE LETTERS OF ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

XII

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

THE New Year found Stevenson down with his first attack of the influenza epidemic, then virulent all over the world. But the illness was not sufficient to stop his work, and in the first two months of the year he was busy continuing his conscientious labours on the *Footnote to History,* seeing *The Wrecker* and *The Beach of Falesá* through the press, planning the South Sea plantation novel *Sophia Scarlet,* which never got beyond that inchoate stage, and writing the continuation to *Kidnapped,* first intended to bear the name of the hero David Balfour, and afterwards changed to *Catriona.* With this he proceeded swimmingly, completing it between February and May, in a shorter time than any other of his sustained narratives. By May also he had finished the *Footnote,* and then had a dash at the first chapters of *The Young Chevalier,* which stand in their truncated state a piece of work as vivid and telling as he had ever done. Early in the autumn he struck a still fuller note in the draft of the first chapters of *Weir of Hermiston.*

During this year the household of Vailima received a new temporary inmate in the person of Mr. Graham Balfour, a cousin whom Stevenson had not previously known, but with whom he soon formed the closest and most confidential friendship of his later life. In the

summer and early autumn he was much taken up both with politics and with hospitalities. As hereinafter narrated, he made, and was thwarted in, a serious attempt to effect a reconciliation between the two rival chiefs; and continued his series of letters to the *Times* showing up the incompetence, and worse, of the responsible Treaty officials. In August he took lively pleasure in a visit paid to the islands by Lady Jersey and some members of her family from Australia. During the course of their stay he conducted the visitors to the rebel camp under aliases, as the needs of the time required, and in a manner that seemed like the realisation of a chapter of a Waverley novel. A month or two later he became aware, with more amusement than alarm, of measures for his deportation set on foot but not carried through by the Treaty officials. For a man of his temper, the political muddle and mismanagement of which the Samoan Islands were the scene, however much he might lament them for the sake of the inhabitants,—and not only these, but even the risks he ran of serious personal consequences from his own action,—added to life at least as much of zest and excitement as of annoyance.

In October he determined, not without serious financial misgivings and chiefly in deference to his mother's urgency, to proceed with the building of a new and larger house adjoining and communicating with that he had hitherto inhabited. The work was promptly and efficiently carried out by the German firm and completed by the end of the year. Quite towards the close of December, copies of the *Footnote to History* reached Samoa, and the book, so far from being a cause of offence to his friends the managers of that firm, as both he and they had feared, was found acceptable and devoid of offence by them: a result celebrated in the convivial manner described in the last letter of this section. On the whole the year had been a prosperous one, full of successful work and eager interests, although darkened in its later months by disquietude on account

of his wife's health. He had himself well maintained the improved strength and the renewed capacity both for literary work and outdoor activity which life in the South Seas had brought him from the first.

To E. L. Burlingame

[*Vailima*] *Jan. 2nd, '92*

My dear Burlingame,—Overjoyed you were pleased with *The Wrecker,* and shall consider your protests. There is perhaps more art than you think for in the peccant chapter, where I have succeeded in packing into one a dedication, an explanation, and a termination. Surely you had not recognised the phrase about boodle? It was a quotation from Jim Pinkerton, and seemed to me agreeably skittish. However, all shall be prayerfully considered.

To come to a more painful subject. Herewith go three more chapters of the wretched *History:* as you see, I approach the climax. I expect the book to be some 70,000 words, of which you have now 45. Can I finish it for next mail? I am going to try! 'Tis a long piece of journalism, and full of difficulties here and there, of this kind and that, and will make me a power of friends to be sure. There is one Becker who will probably put up a window to me in the church where he was baptised; and I expect a testimonial from Captain Hand.

Sorry to let the mail go without the *Scott;* this has been a bad month with me, and I have been below myself. I shall find a way to have it come by next, or know the reason why. The mail after, anyway.

A bit of a sketch map appears to me necessary for my *History;* perhaps two. If I do not have any, 'tis impossible any one should follow; and I, even when not at all interested, demand that I shall be able to follow; even a tourist book without a map is a cross to me; and there must be others of my way of think-

ing. I inclose the very artless one that I think needful. Vailima, in case you are curious, is about as far again behind Tanugamanono as that is from the sea.

M'Clure is publishing a short story of mine, some 50,000 words, I think, *The Beach of Falesá;* when he's done with it, I want you and Cassell to bring it out in a little volume; I shall send you a dedication for it; I believe it good; indeed, to be honest, very good. Good gear that pleases the merchant.

The other map that I half threaten is a chart for the hurricane. Get me Kimberley's report of the hurricane: not to be found here. It is of most importance; I *must* have it with my proofs of that part if I cannot have it earlier, which now seems impossible.—Yours in hot haste,

R. L. Stevenson.

To Miss Adelaide Boodle

At the news that his correspondent is occupied teaching and entertaining a class of children in a Kilburn basement, Stevenson bethinks himself of helping her by writing an account of Samoa and Samoan life for children.

Vailima, January 4th, 1892

My dear Adelaide,—We were much pleased with your letter and the news of your employment. Admirable, your method. But will you not run dry of fairy stories? Please salute your pupils, and tell them that a long, lean, elderly man who lives right through on the under side of the world, so that down in your cellar you are nearer him than the people in the street, desires his compliments. This man lives in an island which is not very long, and extremely narrow. The sea beats round it very hard, so that it is difficult to get to shore. There is only one harbour where ships come, even that is very wild and dangerous; four ships of war were broken there a little while ago, and one of them is still lying on its side on a rock clean above water, where the sea

threw it as you might throw your fiddle-bow on the table. All round the harbour the town is strung out, it is nothing but wood houses, only there are some churches built of stone, not very large, but the people have never seen such fine buildings. Almost all the houses are of one story. Away at one end lives the king of the whole country. His palace has a thatched roof which stands upon posts; it has no walls, but when it blows and rains, they have Venetian blinds which they let down between the posts and make it very snug. There is no furniture, and the King and Queen and the courtiers sit and eat on the floor, which is of gravel: the lamp stands there too, and every now and then it is upset. These good folks wear nothing but a kilt about their waists, unless to go to church or for a dance, or the New Year, or some great occasion. The children play marbles all along the street; and though they are generally very jolly, yet they get awfully cross over their marbles, and cry and fight like boys and girls at home. Another amusement in country places is to shoot fish with a bow and arrow. All round the beach there is bright shallow water where fishes can be seen darting or lying in shoals. The child trots round the shore, and wherever he sees a fish, lets fly an arrow and misses, and then wades in after his arrow. It is great fun (I have tried it) for the child, and I never heard of it doing any harm to the fishes: so what could be more jolly? The road up to this lean man's house is uphill all the way and through forests; the forests are of great trees, not so much unlike the trees at home, only here and there are some very queer ones mixed with them, cocoanut palms, and great forest trees covered with blossom like red hawthorn, but not near so bright; and from all the trees thick creepers hang down like ropes, and nasty-looking weeds that they call orchids grow in the forks of the branches; and on the ground many prickly things are dotted which they call pineapples: I suppose every one has eaten pineapple drops.

On the way up to the lean man's house you pass a little village, all of houses like the king's house, so that as you ride through you can see everybody sitting at dinner, or if it be night, lying in their beds by lamp-light; for all these people are terribly afraid of ghosts, and would not lie in the dark for any favour. After the village, there is only one more house, and that is the lean man's. For the people are not very many, and live all by the sea, and the whole inside of the island is desert wood and mountains. When the lean man goes into this forest, he is very much ashamed to say it, but he is always in a terrible fright. The wood is so great and empty and hot, and it is always filled with curious noises; birds cry like children and bark like dogs, and he can hear people laughing and felling trees; and the other day (when he was far in the woods) he heard a great sound like the biggest mill-wheel possible going with a kind of dot-and-carry-one movement like a dance. That was the noise of an earthquake away down below him in the bowels of the earth, and that is the same thing as to say up towards you in your cellar in Kilburn. All these noises make him feel lonely and scared, and he doesn't quite know what he is scared of. Once when he was just about to cross a river, a blow struck him on the top of his head and knocked him head-foremost down the bank and splash into the water. It was a nut, I fancy, that had fallen from a tree, by which accidents people are sometimes killed. But at the time he thought it was a black boy.

Aha, say you, and what is a black boy? Well, there are here a lot of poor people who are brought here from distant islands to labour as slaves for the Germans. They are not at all like the king or his people, who are brown and very pretty; but these are black as negroes and as ugly as sin, poor souls, and in their own lands they live all the time at war and cook and eat men's flesh. The Germans thrash them with whips to make them work, and every now and then some run away into the Bush, as the forest is called, and build little

sheds of leaves, and eat nuts and roots and fruit, and dwell there by themselves in the great desert. Sometimes they are bad and wild and come down in the villages and steal and kill; and people whisper to each other that some of them have gone back to their horrid old habits, and catch men and women in order to eat them. But it is very likely not true; and the most of them are only poor, stupid, trembling, half-starved, pitiful creatures like frightened dogs. Their life is all very well when the sun shines, as it does eight or nine months in the year. But it is very different the rest of the time. The wind rages here most violently. The great trees thrash about like whips; the air is filled with leaves and great branches flying about like birds; and the sound of the trees falling shakes the earth. It rains too as it never rains at home. You can hear a shower while it is yet half a mile away, hissing like a shower-bath in the forest; and when it comes to you, the water blinds your eyes, and the cold drenching takes your breath away as though some one had struck you. In that kind of weather it must be dreadful indeed to live in the woods, one man alone by himself. And you must know that, if the lean man feels afraid to be in the forest, the people of the island and the black boys are much more afraid than he. For they believe the woods to be quite filled with spirits; some are like pigs, and some are like flying things; but others (and these are thought the most dangerous) come in the shape of beautiful young women and young men, beautifully dressed in the island manner, with fine kilts and fine necklaces and crowns of scarlet seeds and flowers. Woe betide he or she who gets to speak with one of these! They will be charmed out of their wits, and come home again quite silly, and go mad and die. So that the poor black boy must be always trembling and looking about for the coming of the women-devils.

Sometimes the women-devils go down out of the woods into the villages, and here is a tale the lean man heard last year. One of the islanders was sitting in his

house and he had cooked fish. There came along the road two beautiful young women, dressed as I told you, who came into his house and asked for some of his fish. It is the fashion in the islands always to give what is asked, and never to ask folk's names. So the man gave them fish and talked to them in the island jesting way. And presently he asked one of the women for her red necklace, which is good manners and their way; he had given the fish, and he had a right to ask for something back. "I will give it you by and by," said the woman, and she and her companion went away; but he thought they were gone very suddenly, and the truth is they had vanished. The night was nearly come, when the man heard the voice of the woman crying that he should come to her and she would give the necklace. And he looked out, and behold she was standing calling him from the top of the sea, on which she stood as you might on the table. At that, fear came on the man; he fell on his knees and prayed, and the woman disappeared. It was known afterwards that this was once a woman indeed, but should have died a thousand years ago, and has lived all that while as a devil in the woods beside the spring of a river. Saumai-afe (Sow-my-affy) is her name, in case you want to write to her.—Ever your friend Tusitala (tale-writer),

alias Robert Louis Stevenson.

To Sidney Colvin

The South Sea novel here announced, *Sophia Scarlet*, never got beyond the rough draft of an opening chapter or two.

[*Vailima*] *Jan.* 31*st*, '92

My dear Colvin,—No letter at all from you, and this scratch from me! Here is a year that opens ill. Lloyd is off to "the coast" sick—*the coast* means California over most of the Pacific—I have been down all month with influenza, and am just recovering—I am overlaid

with proofs, which I am just about half fit to attend to. One of my horses died this morning, and another is now dying on the front lawn—Lloyd's horse and Fanny's. Such is my quarrel with destiny. But I am mending famously, come and go on the balcony, have perfectly good nights, and though I still cough, have no oppression and no hemorrhage and no fever. So if I can find time and courage to add no more, you will know my news is not altogether of the worst; a year or two ago, and what a state I should have been in now! Your silence, I own, rather alarms me. But I tell myself you have just miscarried; had you been too ill to write, some one would have written me. Understand, I send this brief scratch not because I am unfit to write more, but because I have 58 galleys of *The Wrecker* and 102 of *The Beach of Falesá* to get overhauled somehow or other in time for the mail, and for three weeks I have not touched a pen with my finger.

Feb. 1*st.*—The second horse is still alive, but I still think dying. The first was buried this morning. My proofs are done; it was a rough two days of it, but done. *Consummatum est; na uma.* I believe *The Wrecker* ends well; if I know what a good yarn is, the last four chapters make a good yarn—but pretty horrible. *The Beach of Falesá* I still think well of, but it seems it's immoral and there's a to-do, and financially it may prove a heavy disappointment. The plaintiff request sent to me, to make the young folks married properly before "that night," I refused; you will see what would be left of the yarn, had I consented.* This is a poison bad world for the romancer, this Anglo-Saxon world; I usually get out of it by not having any women in it at all; but when I remember I had *The Treasure of Franchard* refused as unfit for a family magazine, I feel despair weigh upon my wrists.

*Editors and publishers (since those days we have been *déniaisés* with a vengeance) had actually been inclined to shy at the terms of the fraudulent marriage contract, which is the pivot of the whole story: see below, p. 45.

As I know you are always interested in novels, I must tell you that a new one is now entirely planned. It is to be called *Sophia Scarlet,* and is in two parts. Part I. The Vanilla Planter. Part II. The Overseers. No chapters, I think; just two dense blocks of narrative, the first of which is purely sentimental, but the second has some rows and quarrels, and winds up with an explosion, if you please! I am just burning to get at *Sophia,* but I *must* do this Samoan journalism—that's a cursed duty. The first part of *Sophia,* bar the first twenty or thirty pages, writes itself; the second is more difficult, involving a good many characters—about ten, I think—who have to be kept all moving, and give the effect of a society. I have three women to handle, out and well-away! but only Sophia is in full tone. Sophia and two men, Windermere, the Vanilla planter, who dies at the end of Part I., and Rainsforth, who only appears in the beginning of Part II. The fact is, I blush to own it, but *Sophia* is a *regular novel;* heroine and hero, and false accusation, and love, and marriage, and all the rest of it—all planted in a big South Sea plantation and run by ex-English officers—*à la* Stewart's plantation in Tahiti.* There is a strong undercurrent of labour trade which gives it a kind of Uncle Tom flavour, *absit omen!*

The first start is hard; it is hard to avoid a little tedium here, but I think by beginning with the arrival of the three Miss Scarlets hot from school and society in England, I may manage to slide in the information. The problem is exactly a Balzac one, and I wish I had his fist—for I have already a better method—the kinetic, whereas he continually allowed himself to be led into the static. But then he had the fist, and the most I can hope is to get out of it with a modicum of grace and energy, but for sure without the strong impression, the full, dark brush. Three people have had it, the real creator's brush: Scott, see much of *The*

* For a lively account of this plantation and its history, see Lord Pembroke's *South Sea Bubbles,* chap. I.

Antiquary and *The Heart of Midlothian* (especially all round the trial, before, during, and after)—Balzac—and Thackeray in *Vanity Fair*. Everybody else either paints *thin*, or has to stop to paint, or paints excitedly, so that you see the author skipping before his canvas. Here is a long way from poor Sophia Scarlet!

This day is published

Sophia Scarlet

By

Robert Louis Stevenson

To J. M. Barrie

The following is the first of several letters to Mr. J. M. Barrie, for whose work Stevenson had a warm admiration, and with whom he soon established by correspondence a cordial friendship.

Vailima, Samoa, February, 1892

Dear Mr. Barrie,—This is at least the third letter I have written you, but my correspondence has a bad habit of not getting so far as the post. That which I possess of manhood turns pale before the business of the address and envelope. But I hope to be more fortunate with this: for, besides the usual and often recurrent desire to thank you for your work—you are one of four that have come to the front since I was watching and had a corner of my own to watch, and there is no reason, unless it be in these mysterious tides that ebb and flow, and make and mar and murder the works of poor scribblers, why you should not do work of the best order. The tides have borne away my sentence, of which I was weary at any rate, and between authors, I may allow myself so much freedom as to leave it pending. We are both Scots besides, and I suspect both rather Scotty Scots; my own Scotchness tends to inter-

mittency but is at times erisypelitous—if that be rightly spelt. Lastly, I have gathered we had both made our stages in the metropolis of the winds: our Virgil's "grey metropolis," and I count that a lasting bond. No place so brands a man.

Finally, I feel it a sort of duty to you to report progress. This may be an error, but I believed I detected your hand in an article—it may be an illusion, it may have been by one of those industrious insects who catch up and reproduce the handling of each emergent man—but I'll still hope it was yours—and hope it may please you to hear that the continuation of *Kidnapped* is under way. I have not yet got to Alan, so I do not know if he is still alive, but David seems to have a kick or two in his shanks. I was pleased to see how the Anglo-Saxon theory fell into the trap: I gave my Lowlander a Gaelic name, and even commented on the fact in the text; yet almost all critics recognised in David and Alan a Saxon and a Celt. I know not about England; in Scotland at least, where Gaelic was spoken in Fife little over the century ago, and in Galloway not much earlier, I deny that there exists such a thing as a pure Saxon, and I think it more than questionable if there be such a thing as a pure Celt.

But what have you to do with this? and what have I? Let us continue to inscribe our little bits of tales, and let the heathen rage!—Yours, with sincere interest in your career,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

To Sidney Colvin

[*Vailima*] *Feb.*, 1892

My dear Colvin,—This has been a busyish month for a sick man. First, Faauma—the bronze candlestick, whom otherwise I called my butler—bolted from the bed and bosom of Lafaele, the Archangel Hercules, prefect of the cattle. There was a deuce to pay, and

Hercules was inconsolable, and immediately started out after a new wife, and has had one up on a visit, but says she has "no conversation"; and I think he will take back the erring and possibly repentant candlestick; whom we all devoutly prefer, as she is not only highly decorative, but good-natured, and if she does little work makes no rows. I tell this lightly, but it really was a heavy business; many were accused of complicity, and Lafaele was really very sorry. I had to hold beds of justice—literally—seated in my bed and surrounded by lying Samoans seated on the floor; and there were many picturesque and still inexplicable passages. It is hard to reach the truth in these islands.

The next incident overlapped with this. S. and Fanny found three strange horses in the paddock: for long now the boys have been forbidden to leave their horses here one hour because our grass is overgrazed. S. came up with the news, and I saw I must now strike a blow. "To the pound with the lot," said I. He proposed taking the three himself, but I thought that too dangerous an experiment, said I should go too, and hurried into my boots so as to show decision taken, in the necessary interviews. They came, of course—the interviews—and I explained what I was going to do at huge length, and stuck to my guns. I am glad to say the natives, with their usual (purely speculative) sense of justice, highly approved the step after reflection. Meanwhile off went S. and I with the three *corpora delicti;* and a good job I went! Once, when our circus began to kick, we thought all was up; but we got them down all sound in wind and limb. I judged I was much fallen off from my Elliot forefathers, who managed this class of business with neatness and despatch.

As we got down to town, we met the mother and daughter of my friend ——, bathed in tears; they had left the house over a row, which I have not time or spirits to describe. This matter dashed me a good deal, and the first decent-looking day I mounted and set

off to see if I could not patch things up. Half-way down it came on to rain tropic style, and I came back from my second outing drenched like a drowned man —I was literally blinded as I came back among these sheets of water; and the consequence was I was laid down with diarrhœa and threatenings of Samoa colic for the inside of another week. Meanwhile up came Laulii,* in whose house Mrs. and Miss —— have taken refuge. One of Mrs. ——'s grievances is that her son has married one of these "pork-eaters and cannibals." (As a matter of fact there is no memory of cannibalism in Samoa.) And a strange thing it was to hear the "cannibal" Laulii describe her sorrows. She is singularly pretty and sweet, her training reflects wonderful credit on her husband; and when she began to describe to us—to act to us, in the tone of an actress walking through a rehearsal—the whole bearing of her angry guests; indicating the really tragic notes when they came in, so that Fanny and I were ashamed to laugh, and touching off the merely ludicrous with infinite tact and sly humour; showing, in fact, in her whole picture of a couple of irate barbarian women, the whole play and sympathy of what we call the civilised mind; the contrast was seizing. I speak with feeling. To-day again, being the first day humanly possible for me, I went down to Apia with Fanny, and between two and three hours did I argue with that old woman—not immovable, would she had been! but with a mechanical mind like a piece of a musical snuff-box, that returned always to the same starting-point; not altogether base, for she was long-suffering with me and professed even gratitude, and was just (in a sense) to her son, and showed here and there moments of genuine and not undignified emotion; but O! on the other side, what lapses—what a mechanical movement of the brain, what occasional trap-door devils of meanness, what a wooden front of pride! I came out damped and saddened and (to say truth) a trifle sick. My wife

* The native wife of a carpenter in Apia.

had better luck with the daughter; but O, it was a weary business!

To add to my grief—but that's politics. Before I sleep to-night I have a confession to make. When I was sick I tried to get to work to finish that Samoa thing; wouldn't go; and at last, in the colic time, I slid off into *David Balfour*,* some 50 pages of which are drafted, and like me well. Really I think it is spirited; and there's a heroine that (up to now) seems to have attractions; *absit omen!* David, on the whole, seems excellent. Alan does not come in till the tenth chapter, and I am only at the eighth, so I don't know if I can find him again; but David is on his feet, and doing well, and very much in love, and mixed up with the Lord Advocate and the (untitled) Lord Lovat, and all manner of great folk. And the tale interferes with my eating and sleeping. The join is bad; I have not thought to strain too much for continuity; so this part be alive, I shall be content. But there's no doubt David seems to have changed his style, de'il ha'e him! And much I care, if the tale travel!

Friday, Feb. ? ? 19th?—Two incidents to-day which I must narrate. After lunch, it was raining pitilessly; we were sitting in my mother's bedroom, and I was reading aloud Kinglake's Charge of the Light Brigade, and we had just been all seized by the horses aligning with Lord George Paget, when a figure appeared on the verandah; a little, slim, small figure of a lad, with blond (*i.e.* limed) hair, a propitiatory smile, and a nose that alone of all his features grew pale with anxiety. "I come here stop," was about the outside of his English; and I began at once to guess that he was a runaway labourer,† and that the bush-knife he had in his hand was stolen. It proved he had a mate, who had lacked

* The sequel to *Kidnapped*, published in the following year under the title *Catriona*.

† Most of the work on the plantations in Samoa is done by "black boys," *i.e.* imported labourers from other (Melanesian) islands: see above, p. 8.

his courage, and was hidden down the road; they had both made up their minds to run away, and had "come here stop." I could not turn out the poor rogues, one of whom showed me marks on his back, into the drenching forest; I could not reason with them, for they had not enough English, and not one of our boys spoke their tongue; so I bade them feed and sleep here to-night, and to-morrow I must do what the Lord shall bid me.

Near dinner time, I was told that a friend of Lafaele's had found human remains in my bush. After dinner, a figure was seen skulking across towards the waterfall, which produced from the verandah a shout, in my most stentorian tones: "*O ai le ingoa?*" literally "Who the name?" which serves here for "What's your business?" as well. It proved to be Lafaele's friend; I bade a kitchen boy, Lauilo, go with him to see the spot, for though it had ceased raining, the whole island ran and dripped. Lauilo was willing enough, but the friend of the archangel demurred; he had too much business; he had no time. "All right," I said, "you too much frightened, I go along," which of course produced the usual shout of delight from all those who did not require to go. I got into my Saranac snow boots; Lauilo got a cutlass; Mary Carter, our Sydney maid, joined the party for a lark, and off we set. I tell you our guide kept us moving, for the dusk fell swift. Our woods have an infamous reputation at the best, and our errand (to say the least of it) was grisly. At last they found the remains; they were old, which was all I cared to be sure of; it seemed a strangely small "pickle-banes" to stand for a big, flourishing, buck-islander, and their situation in the darkening and dripping bush was melancholy. All at once I found there was a second skull, with a bullet-hole I could have stuck my two thumbs in—say anybody else's one thumb. My Samoans said it could not be, there were not enough bones; I put the two pieces of skull together, and at last convinced them. Whereupon, in a flash, they found the not unromantic explanation. This poor brave had succeeded

in the height of a Samoan warrior's ambition; he had taken a head, which he was never destined to show to his applauding camp. Wounded himself, he had crept here into the bush to die with his useless trophy by his side. His date would be about fifteen years ago, in the great battle between Laupepa and Talavou, which took place on My Land, Sir. To-morrow we shall bury the bones and fire a salute in honour of unfortunate courage.

Do you think I have an empty life? or that a man jogging to his club has so much to interest and amuse him?—touch and try him too, but that goes along with the others: no pain, no pleasure, is the iron law. So here I stop again, and leave, as I left yesterday, my political business untouched. And lo! here comes my pupil, I believe, so I stop in time.

March 2nd.—Since I last wrote, fifteen chapters of *David Balfour* have been drafted, and five *tirés au clair*. I think it pretty good; there's a blooming maiden that costs anxiety—she is as virginal as billy; but David seems there and alive, and the Lord Advocate is good, and so I think is an episodic appearance of the Master of Lovat. In Chapter XVII. I shall get David abroad—Alan went already in Chapter XII. The book should be about the length of *Kidnapped;* this early part of it, about D.'s evidence in the Appin case, is more of a story than anything in *Kidnapped*, but there is no doubt there comes a break in the middle, and the tale is practically in two divisions. In the first, James More and the M'Gregors, and Catriona, only show; in the second, the Appin case being disposed of, and James Stewart hung, they rule the roast and usurp the interest—should there be any left. Why did I take up *David Balfour?* I don't know. A sudden passion.

Monday, I went down in the rain with a colic to take the chair at a public meeting; dined with Haggard; sailed off to my meeting, and fought with wild beasts for three anxious hours. All was lost that any sensible man cared for, but the meeting did not break up—thanks a good deal to R. L. S.—and the man who

opposed my election, and with whom I was all the time wrangling, proposed the vote of thanks to me with a certain handsomeness; I assure you I had earned it. . . . Haggard and the great Abdul, his high-caste Indian servant, imported by my wife, were sitting up for me with supper, and I suppose it was twelve before I got to bed. Tuesday raining, my mother rode down, and we went to the consulate to sign a Factory and Commission. Thence I to the lawyers, to the printing office, and to the mission. It was dinner time when I returned home.

This morning, our cook-boy having suddenly left—injured feelings—the archangel was to cook breakfast. I found him lighting the fire before dawn; his eyes blazed, he had no word of any language left to use, and I saw in him (to my wonder) the strongest workings of gratified ambition. Napoleon was no more pleased to sign his first treaty with Austria than was Lafaele to cook that breakfast. All morning, when I had hoped to be at this letter, I slept like one drugged, and you must take this (which is all I can give you) for what it is worth—

D. B.

Memoirs of his Adventures at Home and Abroad. The Second Part; wherein are set forth the misfortunes in which he was involved upon the Appin Murder; his troubles with Lord Advocate Prestongrange; captivity on the Bass Rock; journey into France and Holland; and singular relations with James More Drummond or Macgregor, a son of the notorious Rob Roy.

Chapters.—I. A Beggar on Horseback. II. The Highland Writer. III. I go to Pilrig. IV. Lord Advocate Prestongrange. V. Butter and Thunder. VI. I make a fault in honour. VII. The Bravo. VIII. The Heather on Fire. IX. I begin to be haunted with a red-headed man. X. The Wood by Silvermills. XI. On the march

again with Alan. XII. Gillane Sands. XIII. The Bass Rock. XIV. Black Andie's Tale of Tod Lapraik. XV. I go to Inveraray.

That is it, as far as drafted. Chapters IV. V. VII. IX. and XIV. I am specially pleased with; the last being an episodical bogie story about the Bass Rock told there by the Keeper.

To William Morris

The following draft of a letter addressed to Mr. William Morris was found among Stevenson's papers after his death. It has touches of affectation and constraint not usual with him, and it is most likely on that account that he did not send it; but though not in his best manner, it seems worth printing as illustrating the variety of his interests and admirations in literature.

Vailima, Samoa, Feb., 1892

Master,—A plea from a place so distant should have some weight, and from a heart so grateful should have some address. I have been long in your debt, Master, and I did not think it could be so much increased as you have now increased it. I was long in your debt and deep in your debt for many poems that I shall never forget, and for *Sigurd* before all, and now you have plunged me beyond payment by the Saga Library. And so now, true to human nature, being plunged beyond payment, I come and bark at your heels.

For surely, Master, that tongue that we write, and that you have illustrated so nobly, is yet alive. She has her rights and laws, and is our mother, our queen, and our instrument. Now in that living tongue *where* has one sense, *whereas* another. In the *Heathslayings Story,* p. 241, line 13, it bears one of its ordinary senses. Elsewhere and usually through the two volumes, which is all that has yet reached me of this entrancing publication, *whereas* is made to figure for *where.*

For the love of God, my dear and honoured Morris, use *where,* and let us know *whereas* we are, wherefore our gratitude shall grow, whereby you shall be the

more honoured, wherever men love clear language, whereas now, although we honour, we are troubled.

Whereunder, please find inscribed to this very impudent but yet very anxious document, the name of one of the most distant but not the youngest or the coldest of those who honour you,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Mrs. Charles Fairchild

The projected visit of Mr. Kipling, with his wife and brother-in-law, to Samoa, which is mentioned towards the close of this letter, never took place, much to the regret of both authors.

[*Vailima, March,* 1892]

MY DEAR MRS. FAIRCHILD,—I am guilty in your sight, but my affairs besiege me. The chief justiceship of a family of nineteen persons is in itself no sinecure, and sometimes occupies me for days: two weeks ago for four days almost entirely, and for two days entirely. Besides which, I have in the last few months written all but one chapter of a *History of Samoa* for the last eight or nine years; and while I was unavoidably delayed in the writing of this, awaiting material, put in one-half of *David Balfour,* the sequel to *Kidnapped.* Add the ordinary impediments of life, and admire my busyness. I am now an old, but healthy skeleton, and degenerate much towards the machine. By six at work: stopped at half-past ten to give a history lesson to a step-grandson; eleven, lunch; after lunch we have a musical performance till two; then to work again; bath, 4.40; dinner, five; cards in the evening till eight; and then to bed—only I have no bed, only a chest with a mat and blankets—and read myself to sleep. This is the routine, but often sadly interrupted. Then you may see me sitting on the floor of my verandah haranguing and being harangued by squatting chiefs on a question of a road; or more privately holding an inquiry into some dispute among our familiars, myself on my

bed, the boys on the floor—for when it comes to the judicial I play dignity—or else going down to Apia on some more or less unsatisfactory errand. Altogether it is a life that suits me, but it absorbs me like an ocean. That is what I have always envied and admired in Scott; with all that immensity of work and study, his mind kept flexible, glancing to all points of natural interest. But the lean hot spirits, such as mine, become hypnotised with their bit occupations—if I may use Scotch to you—it is so far more scornful than any English idiom. Well, I can't help being a skeleton, and you are to take this devious passage for an apology.

I thought *Aladdin** capital fun; but why, in fortune, did he pretend it was moral at the end? The so-called nineteenth century, *où va-t-il se nicher?* 'Tis a trifle, but Pyle would do well to knock the passage out, and leave his boguey tale a boguey tale, and a good one at that.

The arrival of your box was altogether a great success to the castaways. You have no idea where we live. Do you know, in all these islands there are not five hundred whites, and no postal delivery, and only one village—it is no more—and would be a mean enough village in Europe? We were asked the other day if Vailima were the name of our post town, and we laughed. Do you know, though we are but three miles from the village metropolis, we have no road to it, and our goods are brought on the pack-saddle? And do you know—or I should rather say, can you believe—or (in the famous old Tichborne trial phrase) would you be surprised to learn, that all you have read of Vailima—or Subpriorsford, as I call it—is entirely false, and we have no ice-machine, and no electric light, and no water supply but the cistern of the heavens, and but one public room, and scarce a bedroom apiece? But, of course, it is well known that I have made enormous sums by my evanescent literature, and you will smile at my false humility. The point, however, is

* By Howard Pyle.

much on our minds just now. We are expecting an invasion of Kiplings; very glad we shall be to see them; but two of the party are ladies, and I tell you we had to hold a council of war to stow them. You European ladies are so particular; with all of mine, sleeping has long become a public function, as with natives and those who go down much into the sea in ships.

Dear Mrs. Fairchild, I must go to my work. I have but two words to say in conclusion.

First, civilisation is rot.

Second, console a savage with more of the milk of that over-civilised being, your adorable schoolboy.

As I wrote these remarkable words, I was called down to eight o'clock prayers, and have just worked through a chapter of Joshua and five verses, with five treble choruses, of a Samoan hymn; but the music was good, our boys and precentress ('tis always a woman that leads) did better than I ever heard them, and to my great pleasure I understood it all except one verse. This gave me the more time to try and identify what the parts were doing, and further convict my dull ear. Beyond the fact that the soprano rose to the tonic above, on one occasion I could recognise nothing. This is sickening, but I mean to teach my ear better before I am done with it or this vile carcase.

I think it will amuse you (for a last word) to hear that our precentress—she is the washerwoman—is our shame. She is a good, healthy, comely, strapping young wench, full of energy and seriousness, a splendid workwoman, delighting to train our chorus, delighting in the poetry of the hymns, which she reads aloud (on the least provocation) with a great sentiment of rhythm. Well, then, what is curious? Ah, we did not know! but it was told us in a whisper from the cook-house—she is not of good family. Don't let it get out, please; everybody knows it, of course, here; there is no reason why Europe and the States should have the advantage of me also. And the rest of my housefolk are all chief-people, I assure you. And my late overseer (far the best of his

race) is a really serious chief with a good "name." Tina is the name; it is not in the Almanach de Gotha, it must have got dropped at press. The odd thing is, we rather share the prejudice. I have almost always —though not quite always—found the higher the chief the better the man through all the islands; or, at least, that the best man came always from a highish rank. I hope Helen will continue to prove a bright exception.

With love to Fairchild and the Huge Schoolboy, I am, my dear Mrs. Fairchild, yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

[*Vailima*] *March 9th* [1892]

MY DEAR S. C.,—Take it not amiss if this is a wretched letter. I am eaten up with business. Every day this week I have had some business impediment—I am even now waiting a deputation of chiefs about the road—and my precious morning was shattered by a polite old scourge of a *faipule*—parliament man—come begging. All the time *David Balfour* is skelping along. I began it the 13th of last month; I have now 12 chapters, 79 pages ready for press, or within an ace, and, by the time the month is out, one-half should be completed, and I'll be back at drafting the second half. What makes me sick is to think of Scott turning out *Guy Mannering* in three weeks! What a pull of work: heavens, what thews and sinews! And here am I, my head spinning from having only re-written seven not very difficult pages—and not very good when done. Weakling generation. It makes me sick of myself, to make such a fash and bobbery over a rotten end of an old nursery yarn, not worth spitting on when done. Still, there is no doubt I turn out my work more easily than of yore; and I suppose I should be singly glad of that. And if I got my book done in six weeks, seeing it will be about half as long as a Scott, and I have to

write everything twice, it would be about the same rate of industry. It is my fair intention to be done with it in three months, which would make me about one-half the man Sir Walter was for application and driving the dull pen. Of the merit we shall not talk; but I don't think Davie is *without* merit.

March 12th.—And I have this day triumphantly finished 15 chapters, 100 pages—being exactly one-half (as near as anybody can guess) of *David Balfour:* the book to be about a fifth as long again (altogether) as *Treasure Island:* could I but do the second half in another month! But I can't, I fear; I shall have some belated material arriving next mail, and must go again at the *History.* Is it not characteristic of my broken tenacity of mind, that I should have left Davie Balfour some five years in the British Linen Company's Office, and then follow him at last with such vivacity? But I leave you again; the last (15th) chapter ought to be rewrote, or part of it, and I want the half completed in the month, and the month is out by midnight; though, to be sure, last month was February, and I might take grace. These notes are only to show I hold you in mind, though I know they can have no interest for man or God or animal.

I should have told you about the Club. We have been asked to try and start a sort of weekly ball for the half-castes and natives, ourselves to be the only whites; and we consented, from a very heavy sense of duty, and with not much hope. Two nights ago we had twenty people up, received them in the front verandah, entertained them on cake and lemonade, and I made a speech —embodying our proposals, or conditions, if you like— for I suppose thirty minutes. No joke to speak to such an audience, but it is believed I was thoroughly intelligible. I took the plan of saying everything at least twice in a different form of words, so that if the one escaped my hearers, the other might be seized. One white man came with his wife, and was kept rigorously on the front verandah below! You see what a sea of

troubles this is like to prove; but it is the only chance —and when it blows up, it must blow up! I have no more hope in anything than a dead frog; I go into everything with a composed despair; and don't mind —just as I always go to sea with the conviction I am to be drowned, and like it before all other pleasures. But you should have seen the return voyage, when nineteen horses had to be found in the dark, and nineteen bridles all in a drench of rain, and the club, just constituted as such, sailed away in the wet, under a cloudy moon like a bad shilling, and to descend a road through the forest that was at that moment the image of a respectable mountain brook. My wife, who is president *with power to expel,* had to begin her functions. . . .

25*th March.*—Heaven knows what day it is, but I am ashamed, all the more as your letter from Bournemouth of all places—poor old Bournemouth!—is to hand, and contains a statement of pleasure in my letters which I wish I could have rewarded with a long one. What has gone on? A vast of affairs, of a mingled, strenuous, inconclusive, desultory character; much waste of time, much riding to and fro, and little transacted or at least peracted.

Let me give you a review of the present state of our live stock.—Six boys in the bush; six souls about the house. Talolo, the cook, returns again to-day, after an absence which has cost me about twelve hours of riding, and I suppose eight hours' solemn sitting in council. "I am sorry indeed for the Chief Justice of Samoa," I said; "it is more than I am fit for to be Chief Justice of Vailima."—Lauilo is steward. Both these are excellent servants; we gave a luncheon party when we buried the Samoan bones, and I assure you all was in good style, yet we never interfered. The food was good, the wine and dishes went round as by mechanism.—Steward's assistant and washman, Arrick, a New Hebridee black boy, hired from the German firm; not so ugly as most, but not pretty neither; not

so dull as his sort are, but not quite a Crichton. When he came first, he ate so much of our good food that he got a prominent belly. Kitchen assistant, Tomas (Thomas in English), a Fiji man, very tall and handsome, moving like a marionette with sudden bounds, and rolling his eyes with sudden effort.—Washerwoman and precentor, Helen, Tomas's wife. This is our weak point; we are ashamed of Helen; the cook-house blushes for her; they murmur there at her presence. She seems all right; she is not a bad-looking, strapping wench, seems chaste, is industrious, has an excellent taste in hymns—you should have heard her read one aloud the other day, she marked the rhythm with so much gloating, dissenter sentiment. What is wrong, then? says you. Low in your ear—and don't let the papers get hold of it—she is of no family. None, they say; literally a common woman. Of course, we have outislanders, who *may* be villeins; but we give them the benefit of the doubt, which is impossible with Helen of Vailima; our blot, our pitted speck. The pitted speck I have said is our precentor. It is always a woman who starts Samoan song; the men who sing second do not enter for a bar or two. Poor, dear Faauma, the unchaste, the extruded Eve of our Paradise, knew only two hymns; but Helen seems to know the whole repertory, and the morning prayers go far more lively in consequence.—Lafaele, provost of the cattle. The cattle are Jack, my horse, quite converted, my wife rides him now, and he is as steady as a doctor's cob; Tifaga Jack, a circus horse, my mother's piebald, bought from a passing circus; Belle's mare, now in childbed or next door, confound the slut! Musu—amusingly translated the other day "don't want to," literally cross, but always in the sense of stubbornness and resistance—my wife's little dark-brown mare, with a white star on her forehead, whom I have been riding of late to steady her —she has no vices, but is unused, skittish, and uneasy, and wants a lot of attention and humouring; lastly (of saddle horses) Luna—not the Latin *moon,* the Hawaiian

overseer, but it's pronounced the same—a pretty little black mare too, but scarce at all broken, a bad bucker, and has to be ridden with a stock-whip and be brought back with her rump criss-crossed like a clan tartan; the two cart-horses, now only used with pack-saddles; two cows, one in the straw (I trust) to-morrow, a third cow, the Jersey—whose milk and temper are alike subjects of admiration—she gives good exercise to the farming saunterer, and refreshes him on his return with cream; two calves, a bull, and a cow; God knows how many ducks and chickens, and for a wager not even God knows how many cats; twelve horses, seven horses, five kine: is not this Babylon the Great which I have builded? Call it *Subpriorsford*.

Two nights ago the club had its first meeting; only twelve were present, but it went very well. I was not there, I had ridden down the night before after dinner on my endless business, took a cup of tea in the mission like an ass, then took a cup of coffee like a fool at Haggard's, then fell into a discussion with the American Consul. . . . I went to bed at Haggard's, came suddenly broad awake, and lay sleepless the live night. It fell chill, I had only a sheet, and had to make a light and range the house for a cover—I found one in the hall, a mackintosh. So back to my sleepless bed, and to lie there till dawn. In the morning I had a longish ride to take in a day of a blinding, staggering sun, and got home by eleven, our luncheon hour, with my head rather swimmy; the only time I have *feared* the sun since I was in Samoa. However, I got no harm, but did not go to the club, lay off, lazied, played the pipe, and read a novel by James Payn—sometimes quite interesting, and in one place really very funny with the quaint humour of the man. Much interested the other day. As I rode past a house, I saw where a Samoan had written a word on a board, and there was an A, perfectly formed, but upside down. You never saw such a thing in Europe; but it is as common as dirt in Polynesia. Men's names are tattooed on the fore-

arm; it is common to find a subverted letter tattooed there. Here is a tempting problem for psychologists.

I am now on terms again with the German consulate, I know not for how long; not, of course, with the President, which I find a relief; still, with the Chief Justice and the English Consul. For Haggard, I have a genuine affection; he is a loveable man.

Wearyful man! "Here is the yarn of Loudon Dodd, *not as he told it, but as it was afterwards written.*"* These words were left out by some carelessness, and I think I have been thrice tackled about them. Grave them in your mind and wear them on your forehead.

The Lang story will have very little about the treasure; the Master † will appear; and it is to a great extent a tale of Prince Charlie *after* the '45, and a love story forbye: the hero is a melancholy exile, and marries a young woman who interests the prince, and there is the devil to pay. I think the Master kills him in a duel, but don't know yet, not having yet seen my second heroine. No—the Master doesn't kill him, they fight, he is wounded, and the Master plays *deus ex machina. I think* just now of calling it *The Tail of the Race;* no—heavens! I never saw till this moment—but of course nobody but myself would ever understand Mill-Race, they would think of a quarter-mile. So—I am nameless again. My melancholy young man is to be quite a Romeo. Yes, I'll name the book from him: *Dyce of Ythan*—pronounce Eethan.

Dyce of Ythan

by R. L. S.

O, Shovel—Shovel waits his turn, he and his ancestors. I would have tackled him before, but my *State Trials* have never come. So that I have now quite planned:—

* In answer to the obvious remark that the length and style of *The Wrecker,* then running in *Scribner's Magazine,* were out of keeping with what professed at the outset to be a spoken yarn.

† Of Ballantrae: the story is the unfinished *Young Chevalier.*

Dyce of Ythan. (Historical, 1750.)
Sophia Scarlet. (To-day.)
The Shovels of Newton French. (Historical, 1650 to 1830.)

And quite planned and part written:—

The Pearl Fisher. (To-day.) (With Lloyd—a machine.)*
David Balfour. (Historical, 1751.)

And, by a strange exception for R. L. S., all in the third person except D. B.

I don't know what day this is now (the 29th), but I have finished my two chapters, ninth and tenth, of *Samoa* in time for the mail, and feel almost at peace. The tenth was the hurricane, a difficult problem; it so tempted one to be literary; and I feel sure the less of that there is in my little handbook, the more chance it has of some utility. Then the events are complicated, seven ships to tell of, and sometimes three of them together; O, it was quite a job. But I think I have my facts pretty correct, and for once, in my sickening yarn, they are handsome facts: creditable to all concerned; not to be written of—and I should think, scarce to be read—without a thrill. I doubt I have got no hurricane into it, the intricacies of the yarn absorbing me too much. But there—it's done somehow, and time presses hard on my heels. The book, with my best expedition, may come just too late to be of use. In which case I shall have made a handsome present of some months of my life for nothing and to nobody. Well, through Her the most ancient heavens are fresh and strong.†

30*th*.—After I had written you, I re-read my hurricane, which is very poor; the life of the journalist is

* Afterwards changed into *The Ebb-Tide*.
† Wordsworth's *Ode to Duty*, a shade misquoted.

hard, another couple of writings and I could make a good thing, I believe, and it must go as it is! But, of course, this book is not written for honour and glory, and the few who will read it may not know the difference. Very little time. I go down with the mail shortly, dine at the Chinese restaurant, and go to the club to dance with islandresses. Think of my going out once a week to dance.

Politics are on the full job again, and we don't know what is to come next. I think the whole treaty *raj* seems quite played out! They have taken to bribing the *faipule* men (parliament men) to stay in Mulinuu, we hear; but I have not yet sifted the rumour. I must say I shall be scarce surprised if it prove true; these rumours have the knack of being right.—Our weather this last month has been tremendously hot, not by the thermometer, which sticks at 86°, but to the sensation: no rain, no wind, and this the storm month. It looks ominous, and is certainly disagreeable.

No time to finish.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To E. L. Burlingame

The first sentences of the following refer to *A Footnote to History*, Chapter x. of which, relating to the hurricane of 1889, was first published in the *Scots Observer*, edited by Mr. Henley.

[*Vailima, March*, 1892]

My dear Burlingame,—Herewith Chapters ix. and x., and I am left face to face with the horrors and dilemmas of the present regimen: pray for those that go down to the sea in ships. I have promised Henley shall have a chance to publish the hurricane chapter if he like, so please let the slips be sent *quam primum* to C. Baxter, W.S., 11 S. Charlotte Street, Edinburgh. I got on mighty quick with that chapter—about five days of the toughest kind of work. God forbid I should ever have such another pirn to wind! When I invent a

language, there shall be a direct and an indirect pronoun differently declined—then writing would be some fun.

DIRECT	INDIRECT
He	Tu
Him	Tum
His	Tus

Ex.: *He* seized *tum* by *tus* throat; but *tu* at the same moment caught *him* by *his* hair. A fellow could write hurricanes with an inflection like that! Yet there would be difficulties too.

Please add to my former orders—

Le Chevalier des Touches
Les Diaboliques } by Barbey d'Aurévilly
Correspondance de Henri Beyle (Stendhal).

Yours sincerely, R. L. STEVENSON.

To the Rev. S. J. Whitmee

In this letter the essential points of Stevenson's policy for Samoa are defined more clearly than anywhere else. His correspondent, an experienced missionary who had been absent from the islands and lately returned, and whom Stevenson describes as being of a nature essentially "childlike and candid," has been induced to support the idea of a one-man power as necessary for putting an end to the existing confusion, and to suggest the Chief Justice, Mr. Cedercrantz, as the person to wield such power. In the present letter and a subsequent conversation Stevenson was able to persuade his correspondent to abandon at least that part of his proposal which concerned the Chief Justice.

[*Vailima*] *Sunday. Better Day, Better Deed*
April 24th, 1892

Private and confidential

DEAR MR. WHITMEE,—I have reflected long and fully on your paper, and at your kind request give you the benefit of my last thoughts.

I. I cannot bring myself to welcome your idea of one man. I fear we are too far away from any moderative influence; and suppose it to be true that the paper is bought, we should not even have a voice. Could we be sure to get a Gordon or a Lawrence, ah! very well. But in this out-of-the-way place, are these extreme experiments wise? Remember Baker; with much that he has done, I am in full sympathy; and the man, though wholly insincere, is a thousand miles from ill-meaning; and see to what excesses he was forced or led.

II. But I willingly admit the idea is possible with the right man, and this brings me with greater conviction to my next point. I cannot endorse, and I would rather beg you to reconsider, your recommendation of the Chief Justice. I told you the man has always attracted me, yet as I have earnestly reconsidered the points against him, I find objection growing. . . .

But there is yet another argument I have to lay before you. We are both to write upon this subject. Many of our opinions coincide, and as I said the other day, on these we may reasonably suppose that we are not far wrong. Now here is a point on which we shall directly counter. No doubt but this will lessen the combined weight of our arguments where they coincide. And to avoid this effect, it might seem worth while to you to modify or cancel the last paragraph of your article.

III. But I now approach what seems to me by far the most important. White man here, white man there, Samoa is to stand or fall (bar actual seizure) on the Samoan question. And upon this my mind is now really made up. I do not believe in Laupepa alone; I do not believe in Mataafa alone. I know that their conjunction implies peace; I am persuaded that their separation means either war or paralysis. It is the result of the past, which we cannot change, but which we must accept and use or suffer by. I have now made up my mind to do all that I may be able—little as it is—to effect a reconciliation between these two men Lau-

pepa and Mataafa; persuaded as I am that there is the one door of hope. And it is my intention before long to approach both in this sense. Now, from the course of our interview, I was pleased to see that you were, if not equally strong with myself, at least inclined to much the same opinion. And in a carefully weighed paper, such as that you read me, I own I should be pleased to have this cardinal matter touched upon. At home it is not, it cannot be, understood: Mataafa is thought a rebel; the Germans profit by the thought to pursue their career of vengeance for Fagalii; the two men are perpetually offered as alternatives—they are no such thing—they are complementary; authority, supposing them to survive, will be impossible without both. They were once friends, fools and meddlers set them at odds, they must be friends again or have so much wisdom and public virtue as to pretend a friendship. There is my policy for Samoa. And I wish you would at least touch upon that point, I care not how; because, although I am far from supposing you feel it to be necessary in the same sense or to the same degree as I do, I am well aware that no man knows Samoa but must see its huge advantages. Excuse this long and tedious lecture which I see I have to mark private and confidential, or I might get into deep water, and believe me, yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To CHARLES BAXTER

The maps herein bespoken do not adorn the original edition of *Catriona,* but were executed by Messrs. Bartholomew for the Edinburgh Edition in a manner that would have rejoiced the writer's heart.

[*Vailima*] *April* 28, 1892

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I have just written the dedication of *David Balfour* to you, and haste to put a job in

your hands. This is a map of the environs of Edinburgh *circa* 1750. It must contain Hope Park, Hunter's Bog, Calton Hill, the Mouter Hill, Lang Dykes, Nor' Loch, West Kirk, Village of Dean, pass down the water to Stockbridge, Silvermills, the two mill lakes there with a wood on the south side of the south one which I saw marked on a plan in the British Museum, Broughton, Picardy, Leith Walk, Leith, Pilrig, Lochend, Figgate Whins. And I would like a piece in a corner, giving for the same period Figgate Whins, Musselburgh, Inveresk, Prestonpans, battlefield of Gladsmuir, Cockenzie, Gullane—which I spell Gillane—Fidra, Dirleton, North Berwick Law, Whitekirk, Tantallon Castle and Castleton, Scougal and Auldhame, the Bass, the Glenteithy rocks, Satan's Bush, Wildfire rocks, and, if possible, the May. If need were, I would not stick at two maps. If there is but one, say, *Plan to illustrate David Balfour's adventures in the Lothians.* If two, call the first *Plan to illustrate David Balfour's adventures about the city of Edinburgh*, and the second, *Plan to illustrate David Balfour's adventures in East Lothian.* I suppose there must be a map-maker of some taste in Edinburgh; I wish few other names in, but what I have given, as far as possible. As soon as may be I will let you have the text, when you might even find some amusement in seeing that the maps fill the bill. If your map-maker be a poor creature, plainness is best; if he were a fellow of some genuine go, he might give it a little of the bird's-eye quality. I leave this to your good taste. If I have time I will copy the dedication to go herewith; I am pleased with it. The first map (suppose we take two) would go in at the beginning, the second at Chapter XI. The topography is very much worked into the story, and I have alluded in the dedication to our common fancy for exploring Auld Reekie.

The list of books came duly, for which many thanks. I am plunged to the nostrils in various business.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

[*Vailima*] *May 1st*, 1892

My dear Colvin,—As I rode down last night about six, I saw a sight I must try to tell you of. In front of me, right over the top of the forest into which I was descending, was a vast cloud. The front of it accurately represented the somewhat rugged, long-nosed, and beetle-browed profile of a man, crowned by a huge Kalmuck cap; the flesh part was of a heavenly pink, the cap, the moustache, the eye-brows were of a bluish grey; to see this with its childish exactitude of design and colour, and hugeness of scale—it covered at least 25°—held me spellbound. As I continued to gaze, the expression began to change; he had the exact air of closing one eye, dropping his jaw, and drawing down his nose; had the thing not been so imposing, I could have smiled; and then almost in a moment, a shoulder of leaden-coloured bank drove in front and blotted it. My attention spread to the rest of the cloud, and it was a thing to worship. It rose from the horizon, and its top was within thirty degrees of the zenith; the lower parts were like a glacier in shadow, varying from dark indigo to a clouded white in exquisite gradations. The sky behind, so far as I could see, was all of a blue already enriched and darkened by the night, for the hill had what lingered of the sunset. But the top of my Titanic cloud flamed in broad sunlight, with the most excellent softness and brightness of fire and jewels, enlightening all the world. It must have been far higher than Mount Everest, and its glory, as I gazed up at it out of the night, was beyond wonder. Close by rode the little crescent moon; and right over its western horn, a great planet of about equal lustre with itself. The dark woods below were shrill with that noisy business of the birds' evening worship. When I returned, after eight, the moon was near down; she seemed little brighter than before, but now that the

cloud no longer played its part of a nocturnal sun, we could see that sight, so rare with us at home that it was counted a portent, so customary in the tropics, of the dark sphere with its little gilt band upon the belly. The planet had been setting faster, and was now below the crescent. They were of an equal brightness.

I could not resist trying to reproduce this in words, as a specimen of these incredibly beautiful and imposing meteors of the tropic sky that make so much of my pleasure here; though a ship's deck is the place to enjoy them. O what *awful* scenery, from a ship's deck, in the tropics! People talk about the Alps, but the clouds of the trade wind are alone for sublimity.

Now to try and tell you what has been happening. The state of these islands, and of Mataafa and Laupepa (Malietoa's *ambo*), had been much on my mind. I went to the priests and sent a message to Mataafa, at a time when it was supposed he was about to act. He did not act, delaying in true native style, and I am determined I should go to visit him. I have been very good not to go sooner; to live within a few miles of a rebel camp, to be a novelist, to have all my family forcing me to go, and to refrain all these months, counts for virtue. But hearing that several people had gone and the government done nothing to punish them, and having an errand there which was enough to justify myself in my own eyes, I half determined to go, and spoke of it with the half-caste priest. And here (confound it) up came Laupepa and his guards to call on me; we kept him to lunch, and the old gentleman was very good and amiable. He asked me why I had not been to see him? I reminded him a law had been made, and told him I was not a small boy to go and ask leave of the consuls, and perhaps be refused. He told me to pay no attention to the law but come when I would, and begged me to name a day to lunch. The next day (I think it was) early in the morning, a man appeared; he had metal buttons like a policeman—but he was none of our Apia force; he was a rebel policeman, and

had been all night coming round inland through the forest from Malie. He brought a letter addressed

I laua susga To his Excellency
Misi Mea. Mr. Thingumbob.

(So as not to compromise me.) I can read Samoan now, though not speak it. It was to ask me for last Wednesday. My difficulty was great; I had no man here who was fit, or who would have cared, to write for me; and I had to postpone the visit. So I gave up half-a-day with a groan, went down to the priests, arranged for Monday week to go to Malie, and named Thursday as my day to lunch with Laupepa. I was sharply ill on Wednesday, mail day. But on Thursday I had to trail down and go through the dreary business of a feast, in the king's wretched shanty, full in view of the President's fine new house; it made my heart burn.

This gave me my chance to arrange a private interview with the king, and I decided to ask Mr. Whitmee to be my interpreter. On Friday, being too much exhausted to go down, I begged him to come up. He did. I told him the heads of what I meant to say; and he not only consented, but said, if we got on well with the king, he would even proceed with me to Malie. Yesterday, in consequence, I rode down to W.'s house by eight in the morning; waited till ten; received a message that the king was stopped by a meeting with the President and *faipule;* made another engagement for seven at night; came up; went down; waited till eight, and came away again, *bredouille,* and a dead body. The poor weak, enslaved king had not dared to come to me even in secret. Now I have to-day for a rest, and to-morrow to Malie. Shall I be suffered to embark? It is very doubtful; they are on the trail. On Thursday, a policeman came up to me and began that a boy had been to see him, and said I was going to see Mataafa. —"And what did you say?" said I.—"I told him I did not know about where you were going," said he.—

"A very good answer," said I, and turned away. It is lashing rain to-day, but to-morrow, rain or shine, I must at least make the attempt; and I am so weary, and the weather looks so bad. I could half wish they would arrest me on the beach. All this bother and pother to try and bring a little chance of peace; all this opposition and obstinacy in people who remain here by the mere forbearance of Mataafa, who has a great force within six miles of their government buildings, which are indeed only the residences of white officials. To understand how I have been occupied, you must know that "Misi Mea" has had another letter, and this time had to answer himself; think of doing so in a language so obscure to me, with the aid of a Bible, concordance, and dictionary! What a wonderful Baboo compilation it must have been! I positively expected to hear news of its arrival in Malie by the sound of laughter. I doubt if you will be able to read this scrawl, but I have managed to scramble somehow up to date; and to-morrow, one way or another, should be interesting. But as for me, I am a wreck, as I have no doubt style and handwriting both testify.

8 P.M.—Wonderfully rested; feel almost fit for to-morrow's dreary excursion—not that it will be dreary if the weather favour, but otherwise it will be death; and a native feast, and I fear I am in for a big one, is a thing I loathe. I wonder if you can really conceive me as a politician in this extra-mundane sphere—presiding at public meetings, drafting proclamations, receiving misaddressed letters that have been carried all night through tropical forests? It seems strange indeed, and to you, who know me really, must seem stranger. I do not say I am free from the itch of meddling, but God knows this is no tempting job to meddle in; I smile at picturesque circumstances like the Misi Mea (*Monsieur Chose* is the exact equivalent) correspondence, but the business as a whole bores and revolts me. I do nothing and say nothing; and then a day comes, and I say "This can go on no longer."

9.30 P.M.—The wretched native dilatoriness finds me out. News has just come that we must embark at six to-morrow; I have divided the night in watches, and hope to be called to-morrow at four and get under way by five. It is a great chance if it be managed; but I have given directions and lent my own clock to the boys, and hope the best. If I get called at four we shall do it nicely. Good-night; I must turn in.

May 3rd.—Well, we did get off by about 5.30, or by'r lady! quarter to six: myself on Donald, the huge grey cart-horse, with a ship-bag across my saddle bow, Fanny on Musu and Belle on Jack. We were all feeling pretty tired and sick, and I looked like heaven knows what on the cart-horse: "death on the pale horse," I suggested—and young Hunt the missionary, who met me to-day on the same charger, squinted up at my perch and remarked, "There's a sweet little cherub that sits up aloft." The boat was ready and we set off down the lagoon about seven, four oars, and Talolo, my cook, steering.

May 9th (*Monday anyway*).—And see what good resolutions came to! Here is all this time past, and no speed made. Well, we got to Malie and were received with the most friendly consideration by the rebel chief. Belle and Fanny were obviously thought to be my two wives; they were served their kava together, as were Mataafa and myself. Talolo utterly broke down as interpreter; long speeches were made to me by Mataafa and his orators, of which he could make nothing but they were "very much surprised"—his way of pronouncing obliged—and as he could understand nothing that fell from me except the same form of words, the dialogue languished and all business had to be laid aside. We had kava,* and then

* "Kava, properly Ava, is a drink more or less intoxicating, made from the root of the *Piper Methysticum*, a Pepper plant. The root is grated: formerly it was chewed by fair damsels. The root thus broken up is rubbed about in a great pail, with water slowly added. A strainer of bark cloth is plunged into it at times, and wrung out so as to carry away the small frag-

a dish of arrowroot; one end of the house was screened off for us with a fine tapa, and we lay and slept, the three of us, heads and tails, upon the mats till dinner. After dinner his illegitimate majesty and myself had a walk, and talked as well as my twopenny Samoan would admit. Then there was a dance to amuse the ladies before the house, and we came back by moonlight, the sky piled full of high faint clouds that long preserved some of the radiance of the sunset. The lagoon was very shallow; we continually struck, for the moon was young and the light baffling; and for a long time we were accompanied by, and passed and repassed, a huge whaleboat from Savaii, pulling perhaps twelve oars, and containing perhaps forty people who sang in time as they went. So to the hotel, where we slept, and returned the next Tuesday morning on the three same steeds.

Meanwhile my business was still untransacted. And on Saturday morning, I sent down and arranged with Charlie Taylor to go down that afternoon. I had scarce got the saddle-bags fixed and had not yet mounted, when the rain began. But it was no use delaying now; off I went in a wild waterspout to Apia; found Charlie (Salé) Taylor—a sesquipedalian young half-caste—not yet ready, had a snack of bread and cheese at the hotel while waiting him, and then off to Malie. It rained all the way, seven miles; the road, which begins in triumph, dwindles down to a nasty, boggy, rocky footpath with weeds up to a horseman's

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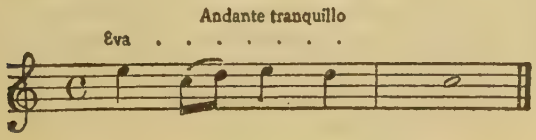
ments of root. The drink is made and used in ceremony. Every detail is regulated by rules, and the manner of the mixture of the water, the straining, the handling of the cup, the drinking out of it and returning, should all be done according to a well-established manner and in certain cadences." I borrow this explanation from the late Mr. La Farge's notes to his catalogue of South Sea Drawings. It may serve to make clearer several passages in later letters of the present collection. Readers of the late Lord Pembroke's *South Sea Bubbles* will remember the account of this beverage and its preparation in Chap. VIII. of that volume.

knees; and there are eight pig fences to jump, nasty beastly jumps—the next morning we found one all messed with blood where a horse had come to grief—but my Jack is a clever fencer; and altogether we made good time, and got to Malie about dark. It is a village of very fine native houses, high, domed, oval buildings, open at the sides, or only closed with slatted Venetians. To be sure, Mataafa's is not the worst. It was already quite dark within, only a little fire of cocoa-shell blazed in the midst and showed us four servants; the chief was in his chapel, whence we heard the sound of chaunting. Presently he returned; Taylor and I had our soaking clothes changed, family worship was held, kava brewed, I was exhibited to the chiefs as a man who had ridden through all that rain and risked deportation to serve their master; they were bidden learn my face, and remember upon all occasions to help and serve me. Then dinner, and politics, and fine speeches until twelve at night—O, and some more kava—when I could sit up no longer; my usual bed-time is eight, you must remember. Then one end of the house was screened off for me alone, and a bed made—you never saw such a couch—I believe of nearly fifty (half at least) fine mats, by Mataafa's daughter, Kalala. Here I reposed alone; and on the other side of the tafa, Majesty and his household. Armed guards and a drummer patrolled about the house all night; they had no shift, poor devils; but stood to arms from sun-down to sun-up.

About four in the morning, I was awakened by the sound of a whistle pipe blown outside in the dark, very softly and to a pleasing simple air; I really think I have hit the first phrase:



It sounded very peaceful, sweet and strange in the dark; and I found this was a part of the routine of my rebel's night, and it was done (he said) to give good dreams. By a little before six, Taylor and I were in the saddle again fasting. My riding boots were so wet I could not get them on, so I must ride barefoot. The morning was fair but the roads very muddy, the weeds soaked us nearly to the waist, Salé was twice spilt at the fences, and we got to Apia a bedraggled enough pair. All the way along the coast, the paté (small wooden drum) was beating in the villages and the people crowding to the churches in their fine clothes. Thence through the mangrove swamp, among the black mud and the green mangroves, and the black and scarlet crabs, to Mulinuu, to the doctor's, where I had an errand, and so to the inn to breakfast about nine. After breakfast I rode home. Conceive such an outing, remember the pallid brute that lived in Skerryvore like a weevil in a biscuit, and receive the intelligence that I was rather the better for my journey. Twenty miles' ride, sixteen fences taken, ten of the miles in a drenching rain, seven of them fasting and in the morning chill, and six stricken hours' political discussions by an interpreter; to say nothing of sleeping in a native house, at which many of our excellent literati would look askance of itself.

You are to understand: if I take all this bother, it is not only from a sense of duty, or a love of meddling—damn the phrase, take your choice—but from a great affection for Mataafa. He is a beautiful, sweet old fellow, and he and I grew quite fulsome on Saturday night about our sentiments. I had a messenger from him to-day with a flannel underskirt which I had left behind like a gibbering idiot; and perpetrated in reply another Baboo letter. It rains again to-day without mercy; blessed, welcome rains, making up for the paucity of the late wet season; and when the showers slacken, I can hear my stream roaring in the hollow, and tell myself that the cacaos are drink-

ing deep. I am desperately hunted to finish my Samoa book before the mail goes; this last chapter is equally delicate and necessary. The prayers of the congregation are requested. Eheu! and it will be ended before this letter leaves and printed in the States ere you can read this scribble. The first dinner gong has sounded; *je vous salue, monsieur et cher confrère. Tofa, soifua!* Sleep! long life! as our Samoan salutation of farewell runs.

Friday, May 13th.—Well, the last chapter, by far the most difficult and ungrateful, is well under way, I have been from six to seven hours upon it daily since I last wrote; and that is all I have done forbye working at Samoan rather hard, and going down on Wednesday evening to the club. I make some progress now at the language; I am teaching Belle, which clears and exercises myself. I am particularly taken with the *finesse* of the pronouns. The pronouns are all dual and plural, and the first person, both in the dual and plural, has a special exclusive and inclusive form. You can conceive what fine effects of precision and distinction can be reached in certain cases. Take Ruth, i. *vv.* 8 to 13, and imagine how those pronouns come in; it is exquisitely elegant, and makes the mouth of the *littérateur* to water. I am going to exercitate my pupil over those verses to-day for pronoun practice.

Tuesday.—Yesterday came yours. Well, well, if the dears prefer a week, why, I'll give them ten days, but the real document, from which I have scarcely varied, ran for one night.* I think you seem scarcely fair to Wiltshire, who had surely, under his beast-ignorant ways, right noble qualities. And I think perhaps you scarce do justice to the fact that this is a place of realism *à outrance;* nothing extenuated or coloured. Looked at so, is it not, with all its tragic features, wonderfully idyllic, with great beauty of scene and circumstance? And will you please to observe that al-

* Referring to the marriage contract in *The Beach of Falesá;* see above, p. 11.

most all that is ugly is in the whites? I'll apologise for Papa Randal if you like; but if I told you the whole truth—for I did extenuate there!—and he seemed to me essential as a figure, and essential as a pawn in the game, Wiltshire's disgust for him being one of the small, efficient motives in the story. Now it would have taken a fairish dose to disgust Wiltshire.—Again, the idea of publishing the *Beach* substantively is dropped—at once, both on account of expostulation, and because it measured shorter than I had expected. And it was only taken up, when the proposed volume, *Beach de Mar,* petered out. It petered out thus: the chief of the short stories got sucked into *Sophia Scarlet* —and *Sophia* is a book I am much taken with, and mean to get to, as soon as—but not before—I have done *David Balfour* and *The Young Chevalier.* So you see you are like to hear no more of the Pacific or the nineteenth century for a while. *The Young Chevalier* is a story of sentiment and passion, which I mean to write a little differently from what I have been doing—if I can hit the key; rather more of a sentimental tremolo to it. It may thus help to prepare me for *Sophia,* which is to contain three ladies, and a kind of a love affair between the heroine and a dying planter who is a poet! large orders for R. L. S.

O, the German taboo is quite over; no soul attempts to support the C. J. or the President, they are past hope; the whites have just refused their taxes—I mean the council has refused to call for them, and if the council consented, nobody would pay; 'tis a farce, and the curtain is going to fall briefly. Consequently in my *History,* I say as little as may be of the two dwindling stars. Poor devils! I like the one, and the other has a little wife, now lying in! There was no man born with so little animosity as I. When I heard the C. J. was in low spirits and never left his house, I could scarce refrain from going to him.

It was a fine feeling to have finished the *History;* there ought to be a future state to reward that grind!

It's not literature, you know; only journalism, and pedantic journalism. I had but the one desire, to get the thing as right as might be, and avoid false concords—even if that! And it was more than there was time for. However, there it is: done. And if Samoa turns up again, my book has to be counted with, being the only narrative extant. Milton and I—if you kindly excuse the juxtaposition—harnessed ourselves to strange waggons, and I at least will be found to have plodded very soberly with my load. There is not even a good sentence in it, but perhaps—I don't know—it may be found an honest, clear volume.

Wednesday.—Never got a word set down, and continues on Thursday 19th May, his own marriage day as ever was. News; yes. The C. J. came up to call on us! After five months' cessation on my side, and a decidedly painful interchange of letters, I could not go down—*could* not—to see him. My three ladies received him, however; he was very agreeable as usual, but refused wine, beer, water, lemonade, chocolate, and at last a cigarette. Then my wife asked him, "So you refuse to break bread?" and he waved his hands amiably in answer. All my three ladies received the same impression that he had serious matters in his mind: now we hear he is quite cock-a-hoop since the mail came, and going about as before his troubles darkened. But what did he want with me? 'Tis thought he had received a despatch—and that he misreads it (so we fully believe) to the effect that they are to have war ships at command and can make their little war after all. If it be so, and they do it, it will be the meanest wanton slaughter of poor men for the salaries of two white failures. But what was his errand with me? Perhaps to warn me that unless I behave he now hopes to be able to pack me off in the *Curaçoa* when she comes.

I have celebrated my holiday from *Samoa* by a plunge at the beginning of *The Young Chevalier.* I am afraid my touch is a little broad in a love story; I

can't mean one thing and write another. As for women, I am no more in any fear of them; I can do a sort all right; age makes me less afraid of a petticoat, but I am a little in fear of grossness. However, this David Balfour's love affair, that's all right—might be read out to a mothers' meeting—or a daughters' meeting. The difficulty in a love yarn, which dwells at all on love, is the dwelling on one string; it is manifold, I grant, but the root fact is there unchanged, and the sentiment being very intense, and already very much handled in letters, positively calls for a little pawing and gracing. With a writer of my prosaic literalness and pertinency of point of view, this all shoves towards grossness—positively even towards the far more damnable *closeness*. This has kept me off the sentiment hitherto, and now I am to try: Lord! Of course Meredith can do it, and so could Shakespeare; but with all my romance, I am a realist and a prosaist, and a most fanatical lover of plain physical sensations plainly and expressly rendered; hence my perils. To do love in the same spirit as I did (for instance) D. Balfour's fatigue in the heather; my dear sir, there were grossness—ready made! And hence, how to sugar? However, I have nearly done with Marie-Madeleine, and am in good hopes of Marie-Salomé, the real heroine; the other is only a prologuial heroine to introduce the hero.

Friday.—Anyway, the first prologuial episode is done, and Fanny likes it. There are only four characters: Francis Blair of Balmile (Jacobite Lord Gladsmuir), my hero; the Master of Ballantrae; Paradou, a wine-seller of Avignon; Marie-Madeleine his wife. These two last I am now done with, and I think they are successful, and I hope I have Balmile on his feet; and the style seems to be found. It is a little charged and violent; sins on the side of violence; but I think will carry the tale. I think it is a good idea so to introduce my hero, being made love to by an episodic woman. This queer tale—I mean queer for me—has

taken a great hold upon me. Where the devil shall I go next? This is simply the tale of a *coup de tête* of a young man and a young woman; with a nearly, perhaps a wholly, tragic sequel, which I desire to make thinkable right through, and sensible; to make the reader, as far as I shall be able, eat and drink and breathe it. Marie-Salomé des Saintes-Maries is, I think, the heroine's name; she has got to *be* yet: *sursum corda!* So has the young Chevalier, whom I have not yet touched, and who comes next in order. Characters: Balmile, or Lord Gladsmuir, *comme vous voulez;* Prince Charlie; Earl Marischal; Master of Ballantrae; and a spy, and Dr. Archie Campbell, and a few nondescripts; then, of women, Marie-Salomé and Flora Blair; seven at the outside; really four full lengths, and I suppose a half-dozen episodic profiles. How I must bore you with these ineptitudes! Have patience. I am going to bed; it is (of all hours) eleven. I have been forced in (since I began to write to you) to blatter to Fanny on the subject of my heroine, there being two *cruces* as to her life and history: how came she alone? and how far did she go with the Chevalier? The second must answer itself when I get near enough to see. The first is a back-breaker. Yet I know there are many reasons why a *fille de famille,* romantic, adventurous, ambitious, innocent of the world, might run from her home in these days; might she not have been threatened with a convent? might there not be some Huguenot business mixed in? Here am I, far from books; if you can help me with a suggestion, I shall say God bless you. She has to be new run away from a strict family, well-justified in her own wild but honest eyes, and meeting these three men, Charles Edward, Marischal, and Balmile, through the accident of a fire at an inn. She must not run from a marriage, I think; it would bring her in the wrong frame of mind. Once I can get her, *sola,* on the highway, all were well with my narrative. Perpend. And help if you can.

Lafaele, long (I hope) familiar to you, has this day received the visit of his *son* from Tonga; and the *son* proves to be a very pretty, attractive young daughter! I gave all the boys kava in honour of her arrival; along with a lean, side-whiskered Tongan, dimly supposed to be Lafaele's step-father; and they have been having a good time; in the end of my verandah, I hear Simi, my present incapable steward, talking Tongan with the nondescript papa. Simi, our outdoor boy, burst a succession of blood-vessels over our work, and I had to make a position for the wreck of one of the noblest figures of a man I ever saw. I believe I may have mentioned the other day how I had to put my horse to the trot, the canter, and (at last) the gallop to run him down. In a photograph I hope to send you (perhaps with this) you will see Simi standing in the verandah in profile. As a steward, one of his chief points is to break crystal; he is great on fracture—what do I say?—explosion! He cleans a glass, and the shards scatter like a comet's bowels.

N. B.—If I should by any change be deported, the first of the rules hung up for that occasion is to communicate with you by telegraph.—Mind, I do not fear it, but it *is* possible.

Monday, 25th.—We have had a devil of a morning of upset and bustle; the bronze candlestick Faauma has returned to the family, in time to take her position of step-mama, and it is pretty to see how the child is at once at home, and all her terrors ended.

27th. Mail day.—And I don't know that I have much to report. I may have to leave for Malie as soon as these mail packets are made up. 'Tis a necessity (if it be one) I rather deplore. I think I should have liked to lazy; but I daresay all it means is the delay of a day or so in harking back to David Balfour; that respectable youth chides at being left (where he is now) in Glasgow with the Lord Advocate, and after five years in the British linen, who shall blame him? I was all forenoon yesterday down in Apia,

dictating, and Lloyd typewriting, the conclusion of *Samoa;* then at home correcting till the dinner bell; and in the evening again till eleven of the clock. This morning I have made up most of my packets, and I think my mail is all ready but two more, and the tag of this. I would never deny (as D. B. might say) that I was rather tired of it. But I have a damned good dose of the devil in my pipe-stem atomy; I have had my little holiday outing in my kick at *The Young Chevalier,* and I guess I can settle to *David Balfour* to-morrow or Friday like a little man. I wonder if any one had ever more energy upon so little strength?—I know there is a frost; the Samoa book can only increase that—I can't help it, that book is not written for me but for Miss Manners; but I mean to break that frost inside two years, and pull off a big success, and Vanity whispers in my ear that I have the strength. If I haven't, whistle ower the lave o't! I can do without glory and perhaps the time is not far off when I can do without corn. It is a time coming soon enough, anyway; and I have endured some two and forty years without public shame, and had a good time as I did it. If only I could secure a violent death, what a fine success! I wish to die in my boots; no more Land of Counterpane for me. To be drowned, to be shot, to be thrown from a horse—ay, to be hanged, rather than pass again through that slow dissolution.

I fancy this gloomy ramble is caused by a twinge of age; I put on an under-shirt yesterday (it was the only one I could find) that barely came under my trousers; and just below it, a fine healthy rheumatism has now settled like a fire in my hip. From such small causes do these valuable considerations flow!

I shall now say adieu, dear Sir, having ten rugged miles before me and the horrors of a native feast and parliament without an interpreter, for to-day I go alone.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

Describing a family expedition to visit Mataafa at Malie.

[*Vailima*] *Sunday, 29th May* [1892]

How am I to overtake events? On Wednesday, as soon as my mail was finished, I had a wild whirl to look forward to. Immediately after dinner, Belle, Lloyd, and I, set out on horseback, they to the club, I to Haggard's, thence to the hotel where I had supper ready for them. All next day we hung round Apia with our whole house-crowd in Sunday array, hoping for the mail steamer with a menagerie on board. No such luck; the ship delayed; and at last, about three, I had to send them home again, a failure of a day's pleasuring that does not bear to be discussed. Lloyd was so sickened that he returned the same night to Vailima, Belle and I held on, sat most of the evening on the hotel verandah stricken silly with fatigue and disappointment, and genuine sorrow for our poor boys and girls, and got to bed with rather dismal appreciations of the morrow.

These were more than justified, and yet I never had a jollier day than Friday 27th. By 7.30 Belle and I had breakfast; we had scarce done before my mother was at the door on horseback, and a boy at her heels to take her not very dashing charger home again. By 8.10 we were all on the landing pier, and it was 9.20 before we had got away in a boat with two inches of green wood on the keel of her, no rudder, no mast, no sail, no boat flag, two defective rowlocks, two wretched apologies for oars, and two boys—one a Tongan half-caste, one a white lad, son of the Tonga schoolmaster, and a sailor lad—to pull us. All this was our first taste of the tender mercies of Taylor (the sesquipedalian half-caste introduced two letters back, I believe). We had scarce got round Mulinuu when Salé Taylor's heart misgave him; he thought we had missed the tide; called a halt, and set off ashore to find canoes. Two

were found; in one my mother and I were embarked with the two biscuit tins (my present to the feast), and the bag with our dry clothes, on which my mother was perched—and her cap was on the top of it—feminine hearts please sympathise; all under the guidance of Salé. In the other Belle and our guest—Tauilo, a chief-woman, the mother of my cook—were to have followed. And the boys were to have been left with the boat. But Tauilo refused. And the four, Belle, Tauilo, Frank the sailor-boy, and Jimmie the Tongan half-caste, set off in the boat across that rapidly shoaling bay of the lagoon.

How long the next scene lasted, I could never tell. Salé was always trying to steal away with our canoe and leave the other four, probably for six hours, in an empty, leaky boat, without so much as an orange or a cocoanut on board, and under the direct rays of the sun. I had at last to stop him by taking the spare paddle off the outrigger and sticking it in the ground —depth, perhaps two feet—width of the bay, say, three miles. At last I bid him land me and my mother and go back for the other ladies. "The coast is so rugged," said Salé.—"What?" I said, "all these villages and no landing-place?"—"Such is the nature of Samoans," said he. Well, I'll find a landing-place, I thought; and presently I said, "Now we are going to land there."—"We can but try," said the bland Salé, with resignation. Never saw a better landing-place in my life. Here the boat joined us. My mother and Salé continued in the canoe alone, and Belle and I and Tauilo set off on foot for Malie. Tauilo was about the size of both of us put together and a piece over; she used us like a mouse with children. I had started barefoot; Belle had soon to pull off her gala shoes and stockings; the mud was as deep as to our knees and so slippery that (moving, as we did, in Indian file, between dense scratching tufts of sensitive) Belle and I had to take hands to support each other, and Tauilo was steadying Belle from the rear. You can

conceive we were got up to kill, Belle in an embroidered white dress and white hat, I in a suit of Bedford cords hot from Sydney tailors; and conceive us, below, ink-black to the knees with adhesive clay, and above, streaming with heat. I suppose it was better than three miles, but at last we made the end of Malie. I asked if we could find no water to wash our feet; and our nursemaid guided us to a pool. We sat down on the pool side, and our nursemaid washed our feet and legs for us—ladies first, I suppose out of a sudden respect to the insane European fancies: such a luxury as you can scarce imagine. I felt a new man after it. But before we got to the King's house we were sadly muddied once more. It was 1 P.M. when we arrived, the canoe having beaten us by about five minutes, so we made fair time over our bog-holes.

But the war dances were over, and we came in time to see only the tail end (some two hours) of the food presentation. In Mataafa's house three chairs were set for us covered with fine mats. Of course, a native house without the blinds down is like a verandah. All the green in front was surrounded with sheds, some of flapping canvas, some of green palm boughs, where (in three sides of a huge oblong) the natives sat by villages in a fine glow of many-hued array. There were folks in tapa, and folks in patchwork; there was every colour of the rainbow in a spot or a cluster; there were men with their heads gilded with powdered sandalwood, others with heads all purple, stuck full of the petals of a flower. In the midst there was a growing field of outspread food, gradually covering acres; the gifts were brought in, now by chanting deputations, now by carriers in a file; they were brandished aloft and declaimed over, with polite sacramental exaggerations, by the official receiver. He, a stalwart, well-oiled quadragenarian, shone with sweat from his exertions, brandishing cooked pigs. At intervals, from one of the squatted villages, an orator would arise. The field was almost beyond the reach

of any human speaking voice; the proceedings besides continued in the midst; yet it was possible to catch snatches of this elaborate and cut-and-dry oratory—it was possible for me, for instance, to catch the description of my gift and myself as the *alii Tusitala, O le alii O malo tetele*—the chief White Information, the chief of the great Governments. Gay designation? In the house, in our three curule chairs, we sat and looked on. On our left a little group of the family. In front of us, at our feet, an ancient Talking-man, crowned with green leaves, his profile almost exactly Dante's; Popo his name. He had worshipped idols in his youth; he had been full grown before the first missionary came hither from Tahiti; this makes him over eighty. Near by him sat his son and colleague. In the group on our left, his little grandchild sat with her legs crossed and her hands turned, the model already (at some three years old) of Samoan etiquette. Still further off to our right, Mataafa sat on the ground through all the business; and still I saw his lips moving, and the beads of his rosary slip stealthily through his hand. We had kava, and the King's drinking was hailed by the Popos (father and son) with a singular ululation, perfectly new to my ears. It means, to the expert, "Long live Tuiatua"; to the inexpert, is a mere voice of barbarous wolves. We had dinner, retired a bit behind the central pillar of the house; and, when the King was done eating, the ululation was repeated. I had my eyes on Mataafa's face, and I saw pride and gratified ambition spring to life there and be instantly sucked in again. It was the first time, since the difference with Laupepa, that Popo and his son had openly joined him, and given him the due cry as Tuiatua—one of the eight royal names of the islands, as I hope you will know before this reaches you.

Not long after we had dined, the food-bringing was over. The gifts (carefully noted and tallied as they came in) were now announced by a humorous orator,

who convulsed the audience, introducing singing notes, now on the name of the article, now on the number; six thousand odd heads of taro, three hundred and nineteen cooked pigs; and one thing that particularly caught me (by good luck), a single turtle "for the king"—*le tasi mo le tupu.* Then came one of the strangest sights I have yet witnessed. The two most important persons there (bar Mataafa) were Popo and his son. They rose, holding their long shod rods of Talking-men, passed forth from the house, broke into a strange dance, the father capering with outstretched arms and rod, the son crouching and gambolling beside him in a manner indescribable, and presently began to extend the circle of this dance among the acres of cooked food. *Whatever they leaped over, whatever they called for, became theirs.* To see mediæval Dante thus demean himself struck a kind of a chill of incongruity into our Philistine souls; but even in a great part of the Samoan concourse, these antique and (I understand) quite local manners awoke laughter. One of my biscuit tins and a live calf were among the spoils he claimed, but the large majority of the cooked food (having once proved his dignity) he re-presented to the king.

Then came the turn of *le alii Tusitala.* He would not dance, but he was given—five live hens, four gourds of oil, four fine tapas, a hundred heads of taro, two cooked pigs, a cooked shark, two or three cocoanut branches strung with kava, and the turtle, who soon after breathed his last, I believe, from sunstroke. It was a royal present for "the chief of the great powers." I should say the gifts were, on the proper signal, dragged out of the field of food, by a troop of young men, all with their lava-lavas kilted almost into a loin-cloth. The art is to swoop on the food-field, pick up with unerring swiftness the right things and quantities, swoop forth again on the open, and separate, leaving the gifts in a new pile: so you may see a covey of birds in a corn-field. This reminds me

of a very inhumane but beautiful passage I had forgotten in its place. The gift-giving was still in full swing, when there came a troop of some ninety men all in tafa lavas-lavas of a purplish colour; they paused, and of a sudden there went up from them high into the air a flight of live chickens, which, as they came down again, were sent again into the air, for perhaps a minute, from the midst of a singular turmoil of flying arms and shouting voices; I assure you, it was very beautiful to see, but how many chickens were killed?

No sooner was my food set out than I was to be going. I had a little serious talk with Mataafa on the floor, and we went down to the boat, where we got our food aboard, such a cargo—like the Swiss Family Robinson, we said. However, a squall began, Tauilo refused to let us go, and we came back to the house for half an hour or so, when my ladies distinguished themselves by walking through a Fono (council), my mother actually taking up a position between Mataafa and Popo! It was about five when we started—turtle, pigs, taro, etc., my mother, Belle, myself, Tauilo, a portly friend of hers with the voice of an angel, and a pronunciation so delicate and true that you could follow Samoan as she sang, and the two tired boys Frank and Jimmie, with the two bad oars and the two slippery rowlocks to impel the whole. Salé Taylor took the canoe and a strong Samoan to paddle him. Presently after he went inshore, and passed us a little after, with his arms folded, and *two* strong Samoans impelling him Apia-ward. This was too much for Belle, who hailed, taunted him, and made him return to the boat with one of the Samoans, setting Jimmie instead in the canoe. Then began our torment, Salé and the Samoan took the oars, sat on the same thwart (where they could get no swing on the boat had they tried), and deliberately ladled at the lagoon. We lay enchanted. Night fell; there was a light visible on shore; it did not move. The two women sang, Belle joining them in the hymns she had learned at family

worship. Then a squall came up; we sat a while in roaring midnight under rivers of rain, and, when it blew by, there was the light again, immovable. A second squall followed, one of the worst I was ever out in; we could scarce catch our breath in the cold, dashing deluge. When it went, we were so cold that the water in the bottom of the boat (which I was then baling) seemed like a warm footbath in comparison, and Belle and I, who were still barefoot, were quite restored by laving in it.

All this time I had kept my temper, and refrained as far as might be from any interference, for I saw (in our friend's mulish humour) he always contrived to twist it to our disadvantage. But now came the acute point. Young Frank now took an oar. He was a little fellow, near as frail as myself, and very short; if he weighed nine stone, it was the outside; but his blood was up. He took stroke, moved the big Samoan forward to bow, and set to work to pull him round in fine style. Instantly a kind of race competition—almost race hatred—sprang up. We jeered the Samoan. Salé declared it was the trim of the boat; "if this lady was aft" (Tauilo's portly friend) "he would row round Frank." We insisted on her coming aft, and Frank still rowed round the Samoan. When the Samoan caught a crab (the thing was continual with these wretched oars and rowlocks), *we* shouted and jeered; when Frank caught one, Salé and the Samoan jeered and yelled. But anyway, the boat moved, and presently we got up with Mulinuu, where I finally lost my temper, when I found that Salé proposed to go ashore and make a visit—in fact, we all three did. It is not worth while going into, but I must give you one snatch of the subsequent conversation as we pulled round Apia Bay. "This Samoan," said Salé, "received seven German bullets in the field of Fangalii." "I am delighted to hear it," said Belle. "His brother was killed there," pursued Salé; and Belle, prompt as an echo, "Then there are no more of the

family? how delightful!" Salé was sufficiently surprised to change the subject; he began to praise Frank's rowing with insufferable condescension: "But it is after all not to be wondered at," said he, "because he has been for some time a sailor. My good man, is it three or five years that you have been to sea?" And Frank, in a defiant shout: "Two!" Whereupon, so high did the ill-feeling run, that we three clapped and applauded and shouted, so that the President (whose house we were then passing) doubtless started at the sounds. It was nine when we got to the hotel; at first no food was to be found, but we skirmished up some bread and cheese and beer and brandy; and (having changed our wet clothes for the rather less wet in our bags) supped on the verandah.

On Saturday, 28th, I was awakened about 6.30, long past my usual hour, by a benevolent passer-by. My turtle lay on the verandah at my door, and the man woke me to tell me it was dead, as it had been when we put it on board the day before. All morning I ran the gauntlet of men and women coming up to me: "Mr. Stevenson, your turtle is dead." I gave half of it to the hotel-keeper, so that his cook should cut it up: and we got a damaged shell, and two splendid meals, beefsteak one day and soup the next. The horses came for us about 9.30. It was waterspouting; we were drenched before we got out of the town; the road was a fine going Highland trout stream; it thundered deep and frequent, and my mother's horse would not better on a walk. At last she took pity on us and very nobly proposed that Belle and I should ride ahead. We were mighty glad to do so, for we were cold. Presently, I said I should ride back for my mother, but it thundered again; Belle is afraid of thunder, and I decided to see her through the forest before I returned for my other hen—I may say, my other wet hen. About the middle of the wood, where it is roughest and steepest, we met three pack-horses with barrels of limejuice. I piloted Belle past these—

it is not very easy in such a road—and then passed them again myself, to pilot my mother. This effected, it began to thunder again, so I rode on hard after Belle. When I caught up with her, she was singing Samoan hymns to support her terrors! We were all back, changed, and at table by lunch time, 11 A.M. Nor have any of us been the worse for it sin-syne. That is pretty good for a woman of my mother's age and an invalid of my standing; about all, as Tauilo was laid up with a bad cold, probably increased by rage.

Friday, 3rd June.—On Wednesday the club could not be held, and I must ride down town and to and fro all afternoon delivering messages, then dined and rode up by the young moon. I had plenty news when I got back; there is great talk in town of my deportation: it is thought they have written home to Downing Street requesting my removal, which leaves me not much alarmed; what I do rather expect is that H. J. Moors and I may be haled up before the C. J. to stand a trial for *lèse*-majesty. Well, we'll try and live it through.

The rest of my history since Monday has been unadulterated *David Balfour.* In season and out of season, night and day, David and his innocent harem—let me be just, he never has more than the two—are on my mind. Think of David Balfour with a pair of fair ladies—very nice ones too—hanging round him. I really believe David is as good character as anybody has a right to ask for in a novel. I have finished drafting Chapter xx. to-day, and feel it all ready to froth when the spigot is turned.

O, I forgot—and do forget. What did I mean? A waft of cloud has fallen on my mind, and I will write no more.

Wednesday, I believe, 8th June.—Lots of David, and lots of David, and the devil any other news. Yesterday we were startled by great guns firing a salute, and to-day Whitmee (missionary) rode up to lunch,

and we learned it was the *Curaçoa* come in, the ship (according to rumour) in which I was to be deported. I went down to meet my fate, and the captain is to dine with me Saturday, so I guess I am not going this voyage. Even with the particularity with which I write you, how much of my life goes unexpressed; my troubles with a madman by the name of ——, a genuine living lunatic, I believe, and jolly dangerous; my troubles about poor ——, all these have dropped out; yet for moments they were very instant, and one of them is always present with me.

I have finished copying Chapter XXI. of David—"*solus cum sola;* we travel together." Chapter XXII., "*Solus cum sola;* we keep house together," is already drafted. To the end of XXI. makes more than 150 pages of my manuscript—damn this hair—and I only designed the book to run to about 200; but when you introduce the female sect, a book does run away with you. I am very curious to see what you will think of my two girls. My own opinion is quite clear; I am in love with both. I foresee a few pleasant years of spiritual flirtations. The creator (if I may name myself, for the sake of argument, by such a name) is essentially unfaithful. For the duration of the two chapters in which I dealt with Miss Grant, I totally forgot my heroine, and even—but this is a flat secret—tried to win away David. I think I must try some day to marry Miss Grant. I'm blest if I don't think I've got that hair out! which seems triumph enough; so I conclude.

Tuesday.—Your infinitesimal correspondence has reached me, and I have the honour to refer to it with scorn. It contains only one statement of conceivable interest, that your health is better; the rest is null, and so far as disquisitory unsound. I am all right, but David Balfour is ailing; this came from my visit to the man-of-war where I had a cup of tea, and the most of that night walked the verandah with extraordinary convictions of guilt and ruin, many of

which (but not all) proved to have fled with the day, taking David along with them; he R.I.P. in Chapter XXII.

On Saturday I went down to the town, and fetched up Captain Gibson to dinner; Sunday I was all day at Samoa, and had a pile of visitors. Yesterday got my mail, including your despicable sheet; was fooled with a visit from the high chief Asi, went down at 4 P.M. to my Samoan lesson from Whitmee—I think I shall learn from him, he does not fool me with cock-shot rules that are demolished next day, but professes ignorance like a man; the truth is the grammar has still to be expiscated—dined with Haggard, and got home about nine.

Wednesday.—The excellent Clarke up here almost all day yesterday, a man I esteem and like to the soles of his boots; I prefer him to any one in Samoa, and to most people in the world; a real good missionary, with the inestimable advantage of having grown up a lay-man. Pity they all can't get that! It recalls my old proposal, which delighted Lady Taylor so much, that every divinity student should be thirty years old at least before he was admitted. Boys switched out of college into a pulpit, what chance have they? That any should do well amazes me, and the most are just what was to be expected.

Saturday.—I must tell you of our feast. It was long promised to the boys, and came off yesterday in one of their new houses. My good Simelé arrived from Savaii that morning asking for political advice; then we had Tauilo; Elena's father, a talking-man of Tauilo's family; Talolo's cousin; and a boy of Simelé's family, who attended on his dignity; then Metu, the meat-man—you have never heard of him, but he is a great person in our household—brought a lady and a boy—and there was another infant—eight guests in all. And we sat down thirty strong. You should have seen our procession, going (about two o'clock), all in our best clothes, to the hall of feasting! All in our

Sunday's best. The new house had been hurriedly finished; the rafters decorated with flowers; the floor spread, native style, with green leaves; we had given a big porker, twenty-five pounds of fresh beef, a tin of biscuit, cocoanuts, etc. Our places were all arranged with much care; the native ladies of the house facing our party; the sides filled up by the men; the guests, please observe: the two chief people, male and female, were placed with our family, the rest between S. and the native ladies. After the feast was over, we had kava, and the calling of the kava was a very elaborate affair, and I thought had like to have made Simelé very angry; he is really a considerable chief, but he and Tauilo were not called till after all our family, *and the guests,* I suppose the principle being that he was still regarded as one of the household. I forgot to say that our black boy did not turn up when the feast was ready. Off went the two cooks, found him, decorated him with huge red hibiscus flowers—he was in a very dirty undershirt—brought him back between them like a reluctant maid, and thrust him into a place between Faauma and Elena, where he was petted and ministered to. When his turn came in the kava drinking—and you may be sure, in their contemptuous, affectionate kindness for him, as for a good dog, it came rather earlier than it ought—he was cried under a new name. *Aleki* is what they make of his own name Arrick; but instead of Aleki!" it was called "le ipu o *Vailima,*" and it was explained that he had "taken his chief-name"! a jest at which the plantation still laughs. Kava done, I made a little speech, Henry translating. If I had been well, I should have alluded to all, but I was scarce able to sit up; so only alluded to my guest of all this month, the Tongan, Tomas, and to Simelé, partly for the jest of making him translate compliments to himself. The Talking-man replied with many handsome compliments to me, in the usual flood of

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Samoan fluent neatness; and we left them to an afternoon of singing and dancing. Must stop now, as my right hand is very bad again. I am trying to write with my left.

Sunday.—About half-past eight last night, I had gone to my own room, Fanny and Lloyd were in Fanny's, every one else in bed, only two boys on the premises—the two little brown boys Mitaiele (Michael), age I suppose 11 or 12, and the new steward, a Wallis islander, speaking no English and about fifty words of Samoan, recently promoted from the bush work, and a most good, anxious, timid lad of 15 or 16—looks like 17 or 18, of course—they grow fast here. In comes Mitaiele to Lloyd, and told some rigmarole about Paatalise (the steward's name) wanting to go and see his family in the bush.—"But he has no family in the bush," said Lloyd. "No," said Mitaiele. They went to the boy's bed (they sleep in the walled-in compartment of the verandah, once my dressing-room) and called at once for me. He lay like one asleep, talking in drowsy tones but without excitement, and at times "cheeping" like a frightened mouse; he was quite cool to the touch, and his pulse not fast; his breathing seemed wholly ventral; the bust still, the belly moving strongly. Presently he got from his bed, and ran for the door, with his head down not three feet from the floor and his body all on a stretch forward, like a striking snake: I say "ran," but this strange movement was not swift. Lloyd and I mastered him and got him back to bed. Soon there was another and more desperate attempt to escape, in which Lloyd had his ring broken. Then we bound him to the bed humanely with sheets, ropes, boards, and pillows. He lay there and sometimes talked, sometimes whispered, sometimes wept like an angry child; his principal word was "Faamolemole"—"Please"—and he kept telling us at intervals that his family were calling him. During this interval, by the special grace of God, my boys came home;

we had already called in Arrick, the black boy; now we had that Hercules, Lafaele, and a man Savea, who comes from Paatalise's own island and can alone communicate with him freely. Lloyd went to bed, I took the first watch, and sat in my room reading, while Lafaele and Arrick watched the madman. Suddenly Arrick called me; I ran into the verandah; there was Paatalise free of all his bonds, and Lafaele holding him. To tell what followed is impossible. We were five people at him—Lafaele and Savea, very strong men, Lloyd, I and Arrick, and the struggle lasted until 1 A.M. before we had him bound. One detail for a specimen: Lloyd and I had charge of one leg, we were both sitting on it, and lo! we were both tossed into the air—I, I daresay, a couple of feet. At last we had him spread-eagled to the iron bedstead, by his wrists and ankles, with matted rope; a most inhumane business, but what could we do? it was all we could do to manage it even so. The strength of the paroxysms had been steadily increasing, and we trembled for the next. And now I come to pure Rider Haggard. Lafaele announced that the boy was very bad, and he would get "some medicine" which was a family secret of his own. Some leaves were brought mysteriously in; chewed, placed on the boy's eyes, dropped in his ears (see *Hamlet*) and stuck up his nostrils; as he did this, the weird doctor partly smothered the patient with his hand, and by about 2 A.M. he was in a deep sleep, and from that time he showed no symptom of dementia whatever. The medicine (says Lafaele) is principally used for the wholesale slaughter of families; he himself feared last night that his dose was fatal; only one other person, on this island, knows the secret; and she, Lafaele darkly whispers, has abused it. This remarkable tree we must try to identify.

The man-of-war doctor came up to-day, gave us a strait-waistcoat, taught us to bandage, examined the boy and saw he was apparently well—he insisted on

doing his work all morning, poor lad, and when he first came down kissed all the family at breakfast! The doctor was greatly excited, as may be supposed, about Lafaele's medicine.

Tuesday.—All yesterday writing my mail by the hand of Belle, to save my wrist. This is a great invention, to which I shall stick, if it can be managed. We had some alarm about Paatalise, but he slept well all night for a benediction. This lunatic asylum exercise has no attractions for any of us.

I don't know if I remembered to say how much pleased I was with *Across the Plains* in every way, inside and out, and you and me. The critics seem to taste it, too, as well as could be hoped, and I believe it will continue to bring me in a few shillings a year for a while. But such books pay only indirectly.

To understand the full horror of the mad scene, and how well my boys behaved, remember that they *believed P.'s ravings*, they *knew* that his dead family, thirty strong, crowded the front verandah and called on him to come to the other world. They *knew* that his dead brother had met him that afternoon in the bush and struck him on both temples. And remember! we are fighting the dead, and they had to go out again in the black night, which is the dead man's empire. Yet last evening, when I thought P. was going to repeat the performance, I sent down for Lafaele, who had leave of absence, and he and his wife came up about eight o'clock with a lighted brand. These are the things for which I have to forgive my old cattle-man his manifold shortcomings; they are heroic—so are the shortcomings, to be sure.

It came over me the other day suddenly that this diary of mine to you would make good pickings after I am dead, and a man could make some kind of a book out of it without much trouble. So, for God's sake, don't lose them, and they will prove a piece of provision for my "poor old family," as Simelé calls it.

About my coming to Europe, I get more and more

doubtful, and rather incline to Ceylon again as a place of meeting. I am so absurdly well here in the tropics, that it seems like affectation. Yet remember I have never once stood Sydney. Anyway, I shall have the money for it all ahead, before I think of such a thing.

We had a bowl of punch on your birthday, which my incredible mother somehow knew and remembered.

By the time you receive this, my Samoan book will I suppose be out and the worst known. If I am burned in effigy for it no more need be said; if on the other hand I get off cheap with the authorities, this is to say that, supposing a vacancy to occur, I would condescend to accept the office of H.B.M.'s consul with parts, pendicles, and appurtenances. There is a very little work to do except some little entertaining, to which I am bound to say my family and in particular the amanuensis who now guides the pen look forward with delight; I with manly resignation. The real reasons for the step would be three: 1st, possibility of being able to do some good, or at least certainty of not being obliged to stand always looking on helplessly at what is bad: 2nd, larks for the family; 3rd, and perhaps not altogether least, a house in town and a boat and a boat's crew.*

But I find I have left out another reason: 4th, growing desire on the part of the old man virulent for anything in the nature of a salary—years seem to invest that idea with new beauty.

I sometimes sit and yearn for anything in the nature of an income that would come in—mine has all got to be gone and fished for with the immortal mind of man. What I want is the income that really comes in of itself, while all you have to do is just to blossom and exist and sit on chairs. Think how beautiful it would be not to have to mind the critics, and not even the darkest of the crowd—Sidney Colvin. I

*This about the consulship was only a passing notion on the part of R. L. S. No vacancy occurred, and in his correspondence he does not recur to the subject.

should probably amuse myself with works that would make your hair curl, if you had any left.

R. L. S.

To T. W. Dover

Stevenson's correspondent in this case is an artisan, who had been struck by the truth of a remark in his essay on *Beggars* that it is only or mainly the poor who habitually give to the poor: and who wrote to ask whether it was from experience that Stevenson knew this.

Vailima Plantation, Upolu, Samoa,
June 20th, 1892

Sir,—In reply to your very interesting letter, I cannot fairly say that I have ever been poor, or known what it was to want a meal. I have been reduced, however, to a very small sum of money, with no apparent prospect of increasing it; and at that time I reduced myself to practically one meal a day, with the most disgusting consequences to my health. At this time I lodged in the house of a working-man, and associated much with others. At the same time, from my youth up, I have always been a good deal and rather intimately thrown among the working-classes, partly as a civil engineer in out-of-the-way places, partly from a strong and, I hope, not ill-favoured sentiment of curiosity. But the place where, perhaps, I was most struck with the fact upon which you comment was the house of a friend, who was exceedingly poor, in fact, I may say destitute, and who lived in the attic of a very tall house entirely inhabited by persons in varying stages of poverty. As he was also in ill-health, I made a habit of passing my afternoon with him, and when there it was my part to answer the door. The steady procession of people begging, and the expectant and confident manner in which they presented themselves, struck me more and more daily; and I could not but remember with surprise that though my father lived but a few streets away in a fine house, beggars scarce came to

the door once a fortnight or a month. From that time forward I made it my business to inquire, and in the stories which I am very fond of hearing from all sorts and conditions of men, learned that in the time of their distress it was always from the poor they sought assistance, and almost always from the poor they got it.

Trusting I have now satisfactorily answered your question, which I thank you for asking, I remain, with sincere compliments,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To E. L. BURLINGAME

Vailima, Summer, 1892

MY DEAR BURLINGAME,—First of all, *you have all the corrections on The Wrecker.* I found I had made what I meant and forgotten it, and was so careless as not to tell you.

Second, of course, and by all means, charge corrections on the Samoa book to me; but there are not near so many as I feared. The Lord hath dealt bountifully with me, and I believe all my advisers were amazed to see how nearly correct I had got the truck, at least I was. With this you will receive the whole revise and a type-written copy of the last chapter. And the thing now is Speed, to catch a possible revision of the treaty. I believe Cassells are to bring it out, but Baxter knows, and the thing has to be crammed through *prestissimo, à la chasseur.*

You mention the belated Barbeys; what about the equally belated Pineros? And I hope you will keep your bookshop alive to supplying me continuously with the *Saga Library.* I cannot get enough of *Sagas;* I wish there were nine thousand; talk about realism!

All seems to flourish with you; I also prosper; none the less for being quit of that abhorred task, *Samoa.* I could give a supper party here were there any one to

sup. Never was such a disagreeable task, but the thing had to be told. . . .

There, I trust I am done with this cursed chapter of my career, bar the rotten eggs and broken bottles that may follow, of course. Pray remember, speed is now all that can be asked, hoped, or wished. I give up all hope of proofs, revises, proofs of the map, or sich like; and you on your side will try to get it out as reasonably seemly as may be.

Whole Samoa book herewith. Glory be to God.—Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

The following consists of scraps merely, taken from a letter almost entirely occupied with private family affairs.

[*Vailima*] *Saturday, 2nd July,* 1892

The character of my handwriting is explained, alas! by scrivener's cramp. This also explains how long I have let the paper lie plain.

1 P.M.—I was busy copying *David Balfour* with my left hand—a most laborious task—Fanny was down at the native house superintending the floor, Lloyd down in Apia, and Belle in her own house cleaning, when I heard the latter calling on my name. I ran out on the verandah; and there on the lawn beheld my crazy boy with an axe in his hand and dressed out in green ferns, dancing. I ran downstairs and found all my house boys on the back verandah, watching him through the dining-room. I asked what it meant?—"Dance belong his place," they said. "I think this no time to dance," said I. "Has he done his work?"—"No," they told me, "away bush all morning." But there they all stayed on the back verandah. I went on alone through the dining-room, and bade him stop. He did so, shouldered the axe, and began to walk away; but I called him back, walked

up to him, and took the axe out of his unresisting hands. The boy is in all things so good, that I can scarce say I was afraid; only I felt it had to be stopped ere he could work himself up by dancing to some craziness. Our house boys protested they were not afraid; all I know is they were all watching him round the back door and did not follow me till I had the axe. As for the out boys, who were working with Fanny in the native house, they thought it a very bad business, and made no secret of their fears.

Wednesday, 6*th.*—I have no account to give of my stewardship these days, and there's a day more to account for than mere arithmetic would tell you. For we have had two Monday Fourths, to bring us at last on the right side of the meridian, having hitherto been an exception in the world and kept our private date. Business has filled my hours sans intermission.

Tuesday, 12*th.*—I am doing no work and my mind is in abeyance. Fanny and Belle are sewing-machining in the next room; I have been pulling down their hair, and Fanny has been kicking me, and now I am driven out. Austin I have been chasing about the verandah; now he has gone to his lessons, and I make believe to write to you in despair. But there is nothing in my mind; I swim in mere vacancy, my head is like a rotten nut; I shall soon have to begin to work again or I shall carry away some part of the machinery. I have got your insufficient letter, for which I scorn to thank you. I have had no review by Gosse, none by Birrell; another time, if I have a letter in the *Times,* you might send me the text as well; also please send me a cricket bat and a cake, and when I come home for the holidays, I should like to have a pony.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

JACOB TONSON.

P. S.—I am quite well; I hope you are quite well. The world is too much with us, and my mother bids me bind my hair and lace my bodice blue.

To Rev. R. Wardlaw Thompson

Vailima Plantation, July 12th, 1892

My dear Sir,—1. I am sorry that my letter was so much of a riddle, yet I feared it might be so considered. It is to be thought only that I had reasons to say so much, and reasons for saying no more. Your assurance that the directors "will not be slow" to caution any who shall have overstepped "the missionary character," is all that I could hope; and is much more than I had expected. The rest I will very willingly leave to time.

2. Of the question of who is to protect these islands, I have the satisfaction to think it is beyond my sphere. As to Mataafa and Laupepa, it is my fear that neither one can be king to any good end without the countenance and friendship of the other; even if I were wrong in this apprehension, there is no doubt that the plain, short way to peace lies through their reconciliation; and I regard all who help to prolong or to embitter their estrangement as enemies to Samoa. My opinion is of course no rule; but I must ask you to believe that I do not stand alone; and perhaps I may go so far as to say that even in your own mission opinions are not unanimous. In one point I see you are led in some error. Mataafa was not set up by the Germans; he rose against them, and in part by his successes, in part from outside causes, diplomatic and otherwise, prevailed; nor had the Germans any more immediate business at the Congress of Berlin than to procure his extrusion from the throne in which he then sat *de facto*. This has made a tangled knot here, before which loyalty may very well hesitate. Those who think it simple, I must always think to be one thing of three, either ill-informed or prejudiced or shallow. Nor can I ever think it wise, in a moment of complicated claims and debatable legitimacy, that the mission, which is the organ of religion, culture,

and improvement, should be irretrievably committed upon either side. You have at your hand my friend (as I hope I may call him) Mr. Newall. I believe him to be a strong partisan, but I know him to be wholly honest. Ask him if the case is so simple between Mataafa and Laupepa; ask him if there is not hardship and unfairness—if there is not justice and a strong claim—on both sides of this unfortunate dispute. Ask him to remember the time when he and I spoke with Mataafa and Laupepa sitting together as friends; ask him if these were not the best days, and if the next best would not be to reproduce them. And ask him if he thinks they are likely to be reproduced by sermons on the sin of rebellion.

Pardon me, my dear sir, for troubling you with so long a reply. Interest in the mission is my only motive and excuse. You should have received in the meantime a book of mine on the recent history of these islands, in which I have handled some subjects with an anxious, perhaps almost a disingenuous eye, to the credit of the L. M. S. Indeed I have there tried to equal the sedulous discretion that I use in addressing yourself.—I am, my dear Sir, Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Charles Baxter

Vailima Plantation, Upolu,
Samoan Islands, 18*th July,* 1892

MY DEAR CHARLES,— . . . I have been now for some time contending with powers and principalities, and I have never once seen one of my own letters to the *Times*. So when you see something in the papers that you think might interest the exiles of Upolu, do not think twice, out with your saxpence, and send it flying to Vailima. Of what you say of the past, eh, man, it was a queer time, and awful miserable, but there's no sense in denying it was awful fun. Do you mind the youth in the highland garb and the tableful of

coppers? Do you mind the SIGNAL of Waterloo Place? —Hey, how the blood stands to the heart at such a memory! Hae ye the notes o't? Gie's them.—Gude's sake, man, gie's the notes o't; I mind ye made a tüne o't an' played it on your pinanny; gie's the notes. Dear Lord, that past.

Glad to hear Henley's prospects are fair: his new volume is the work of a real poet. He is one of those who can make a noise of his own with words, and in whom experience strikes an individual note. There is perhaps no more genuine poet living, bar the Big Guns. In case I cannot overtake an acknowledgment to himself by this mail, please let him hear of my pleasure and admiration. How poorly Kipling compares! He is all smart journalism and cleverness: it is all bright and shallow and limpid, like a business paper—a good one, *s'entend;* but there is no blot of heart's blood and the Old Night: there are no harmonics, there is scarce harmony to his music; and in Henley—all of these; a touch, a sense within sense, a sound outside the sound, the shadow of the inscrutable, eloquent beyond all definition. The First London Voluntary knocked me wholly.—Ever yours affectionately, my dear Charles,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Kind memories to your father and all friends.

To W. E. HENLEY

Vailima Plantation, Upolu, Samoa,
August 1st, 1892

MY DEAR HENLEY,—It is impossible to let your new volume pass in silence. I have not received the same thrill of poetry since G. M.'s *Joy of Earth* volume and *Love in a Valley;* and I do not know that even that was so intimate and deep. Again and again, I take the book down, and read, and my blood is fired as it

used to be in youth. *Andante con moto* in the *Voluntaries,* and the thing about the trees at night (No. XXIV. I think) are up to date my favourites. I did not guess you were so great a magician; these are new tunes, this is an undertone of the true Apollo; these are not verse, they are poetry—inventions, creations, in language. I thank you for the joy you have given me, and remain your old friend and present huge admirer,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The hand is really the hand of Esau, but under a course of threatened scrivener's cramp.

For the next edition of the Book of Verses, pray accept an emendation. Last three lines of Echoes No. XLIV. read—

> "But life in act? How should the grave
> Be victor over these,
> Mother, a mother of men?"

The two vocatives scatter the effect of this inimitable close. If you insist on the longer line, equip "grave" with an epithet. R. L. S.

To E. L. BURLINGAME

Accompanying the MS. of the article giving extracts from the record kept by Robert Stevenson the elder of the trip on which Sir Walter Scott sailed in his company on board the *Northern Lights* yacht: printed in *Scribner's Magazine* (see above, p. 5).

Vailima, Upolu, August 1st, '92

MY DEAR BURLINGAME,—Herewith *My Grandfather.* I have had rather a bad time suppressing the old gentleman, who was really in a very garrulous stage; as for getting him *in order,* I could do but little towards that; however, there are one or two points of interest which may justify us in printing. The swinging of his stick and not knowing the sailor of Coruiskin, in particular, and the account of how he wrote the lives

in the Bell Book particularly please me. I hope my own little introduction is not egotistic; or rather I do not care if it is. It was that old gentleman's blood that brought me to Samoa.

By the by, vols. vii., viii., and ix. of Adams's *History* have never come to hand: no more have the dictionaries.

Please send me *Stonehenge on the Horse, Stories and Interludes* by Barry Pain, and *Edinburgh Sketches and Memoirs* by David Masson. *The Wrecker* has turned up. So far as I have seen, it is very satisfactory, but on pp. 548, 549, there has been a devil of a miscarriage. The two Latin quotations instead of following each other being separated (doubtless for printing considerations) by a line of prose. My compliments to the printers; there is doubtless such a thing as good printing, but there is such a thing as good sense.

The sequel to *Kidnapped*, *David Balfour* by name, is about three-quarters done and gone to press for serial publication. By what I can find out it ought to be through hand with that and ready for volume form early next spring.—Yours very sincerely,

R. L. S.

To Andrew Lang

Mr. Andrew Lang had been supplying Stevenson with some books and historical references for his proposed novel, *The Young Chevalier*.

[*Vailima, August,* 1892]

My dear Lang,—I knew you would prove a trusty purveyor. The books you have sent are admirable. I got the name of my hero out of Brown—Blair of Balmyle—Francie Blair. But whether to call the story *Blair of Balmyle*, or whether to call it *The Young Chevalier*, I have not yet decided. The admirable Cameronian tract—perhaps you will think this is a cheat—is to be boned into *David Balfour*, where it

will fit better, and really furnishes me with a desired foothold over a boggy place.

Later; no, it won't go in, and I fear I must give up "the idolatrous occupant upon the throne," a phrase that overjoyed me beyond expression. I am in a deuce of a flutter with politics, which I hate, and in which I certainly do not shine; but a fellow cannot stand aside and look on at such an exhibition as our government. 'Tain't decent; no gent can hold a candle to it. But it's a grind to be interrupted by midnight messengers and pass your days writing proclamations (which are never proclaimed) and petitions (which ain't petited) and letters to the *Times,* which it makes my jaws yawn to re-read, and all your time have your heart with David Balfour: he has just left Glasgow this morning for Edinburgh; James More has escaped from the castle; it is far more real to me than the Behring Sea or the Baring brothers either—he got the news of James More's escape from the Lord Advocate, and started off straight to comfort Catriona. You don't know her; she's James More's daughter, and a respectable young wumman; the Miss Grants think so —the Lord Advocate's daughters—so there can't be anything really wrong. Pretty soon we all go to Holland, and be hanged; thence to Dunkirk, and be damned; and the tale concludes in Paris, and be Poll-parroted. This is the last authentic news. You are not a real hard-working novelist; not a practical novelist; so you don't know the temptation to let your characters maunder. Dumas did it, and lived. But it is not war; it ain't sportsmanlike, and I have to be stopping their chatter all the time. Brown's appendix is great reading.

My only grief is that I can't
Use the idolatrous occupant.

Yours ever, R. L. S.

Blessing and praising you for a useful (though idolatrous) occupant of Kensington.

To Miss Adelaide Boodle

Samoa and the Samoans for children, continued after an eight months' pause.

Vailima Plantation, Samoan Islands, August 14th, 1892.

My dear Miss Boodle,—The lean man is exceedingly ashamed of himself, and offers his apologies to the little girls in the cellar just above. If they will be so good as to knock three times upon the floor, he will hear it on the other side of his floor, and will understand that he is forgiven. I believe I got you and the children—or rather left you and the children—still on the road to the lean man's house. When you get up there a great part of the forest has been cleared away. It comes back again pretty quick, though not quite so high; but everywhere, except where the weeders have been kept busy, young trees have sprouted up, and the cattle and the horses cannot be seen as they feed. In this clearing there are two or three houses scattered about, and between the two biggest I think the little girls in the cellar would first notice a sort of thing like a gridiron on legs made of logs and wood. Sometimes it has a flag flying on it made of rags of old clothes. It is a fort (so I am told) built by the person here who would be much the most interesting to the girls in the cellar. This is a young gentleman of eleven years of age answering to the name of Austin. It was after reading a book about the Red Indians that he thought it more prudent to create this place of strength. As the Red Indians are in North America, and this fort seems to me a very useless kind of building, I am anxious to hope that the two may never be brought together. When Austin is not engaged in building forts, nor on his lessons, which are just as annoying to him as other children's lessons are to them, he walks sometimes in the bush, and if anybody is with him talks all the time. When he is alone I don't

think he says anything, and I daresay he feels very lonely and frightened, just as the lean man does, at the queer noises and the endless lines of the trees. He finds the strangest kinds of seeds, some of them bright coloured like lollipops, or really like precious stones; some of them in odd cases like tobacco-pouches. He finds and collects all kinds of little shells with which the whole ground is scattered, and which, though they are the shells of land animals like our snails, are nearly of as many shapes and colours as the shells on our sea-beaches. In the streams that come running down out of the mountains, and which are all as clear and bright as mirror glass, he sees eels and little bright fish that sometimes jump together out of the surface of the brook in a little knot of silver, and fresh-water prawns which lie close under the stones, and can be seen looking up at him with eyes of the colour of a jewel. He sees all kinds of beautiful birds, some of them blue and white, some of them blue and white and red, and some of them coloured like our pigeons at home, and these last the little girls in the cellar may like to know live almost entirely on nutmegs as they fall ripe off the trees. Another little bird he may sometimes see, as the lean man saw him only this morning, a little fellow not so big as a man's hand, exquisitely neat, of a pretty bronze black like ladies' shoes, and who sticks up behind him (much as a peacock does) his little tail shaped and fluted like a scallop shell.

Here are a lot of curious and interesting things that Austin sees round him every day; and when I was a child at home in the old country I used to play and pretend to myself that I saw things of the same kind. That the rooms were full of orange and nutmeg trees, and the cold town gardens outside the windows were alive with parrots and with lions. What do the little girls in the cellar think that Austin does? He makes believe just the other way: he pretends that the strange great trees with their broad leaves and slab-

sided roots are European oaks; and the places on the road up (where you and I and the little girls in the cellar have already gone) he calls by old-fashioned, far-away European names, just as if you were to call the cellar and the corner of the next street—if you could only manage to pronounce the names—Upolu and Savaii. And so it is with all of us, with Austin and the lean man and the little girls in the cellar; wherever we are it is but a stage on the way to somewhere else, and whatever we do, however well we do it, it is only a preparation to do something else that shall be different.

But you must not suppose that Austin does nothing but build forts and walk among the woods and swim in the rivers. On the contrary, he is sometimes a very busy and useful fellow; and I think the little girls in the cellar would have admired him very nearly as much as he admired himself if they had seen him setting off on horseback with his hand on his hip and his pockets full of letters and orders, at the head of quite a procession of huge white cart-horses with pack saddles, and big brown native men with nothing on but gaudy kilts. Mighty well he managed all his commissions; and those who saw him ordering and eating his single-handed luncheon in the queer little Chinese restaurant on the beach declare he looked as if the place, and the town, and the whole archipelago belonged to him. But I am not going to let you suppose that this great gentleman at the head of all his horses and his men, like the King of France in the old rhyme, would be thought much of a dandy on the streets of London. On the contrary, if he could be seen there with his dirty white cap, and his faded purple shirt, and his little brown breeks that do not reach his knees, and the bare shanks below, and the bare feet stuck in the stirrup leathers, for he is not quite long enough to reach the irons, I am afraid the little boys and girls in your part of the town might feel very much inclined to give him a penny in charity.

So you see that a very, very big man in one place might seem very small potatoes in another, just as the king's palace here (of which I told you in my last) would be thought rather a poor place of residence by a Surrey gipsy. And if you come to that, even the lean man himself, who is no end of an important person, if he were picked up from the chair where he is now sitting, and slung down, feet foremost, in the neighbourhood of Charing Cross, would probably have to escape into the nearest shop, or take the consequences of being mobbed. And the ladies of his family, who are very pretty ladies, and think themselves uncommonly well-dressed for Samoa, would (if the same thing were done to them) be extremely glad to get into a cab.

I write to you by the hands of another, because I am threatened again with scrivener's cramp. My health is beyond reproach; I wish I could say as much for my wife's, which is far from the thing. Give us some news of yours, and even when none of us write, do not suppose for a moment that we are forgetful of our old gamekeeper. Our prettiest walk, an alley of really beautiful green sward which leads through Fanny's garden to the river and the bridge and the beginning of the high woods on the mountainside, where the Tapua fafine (or spirit of the land) has her dwelling, and the work boys fear to go alone, is called by a name that I think our gamekeeper has heard before—Adelaide Road.

With much love from all of us to yourself, and all good wishes for your future, and the future of the children in the cellar, believe me your affectionate friend, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TO THE COUNTESS OF JERSEY

In the month of August this year, Stevenson received much pleasure and entertainment from a visit paid to Apia by the Countess of Jersey, who came over from Sydney with her

brother Captain Leigh and her young daughter Lady Margaret Villiers. "A warm friendship," writes Lady Jersey, "was the immediate result; we constantly met, either in the hospitable abode of our host, Mr. Bazett Haggard, or in Mr. Stevenson's delightful mountain home, and passed many happy hours in riding, walking, and conversation." Among other things, it was arranged that the party should pay a visit of curiosity to the "rebel King," or more properly the rival claimant to the kingly power, Mataafa, in his camp at Malie. Stevenson at once treated the adventure as a chapter out of a Waverley novel. "The wife of the new Governor of New South Wales," continues Lady Jersey, "could not pay such a visit in her own name, so Mr. Stevenson adopted me as his cousin, Amelia Balfour. This transparent disguise was congenial to his romantic instincts, and he writes concerning the arrangements made for the expedition, carefully dating his letter 'Aug. 14, 1745.'"

August 14, 1745

To Miss Amelia Balfour—My dear Cousin,—We are going an expedition to leeward on Tuesday morning. If a lady were perhaps to be encountered on horseback—say, towards the Gasi-gasi river—about six A.M., I think we should have an episode somewhat after the style of the '45. What a misfortune, my dear cousin, that you should have arrived while your cousin Graham was occupying my only guest-chamber—for Osterley Park is not so large in Samoa as it was at home—but happily our friend Haggard has found a corner for you!

The King over the Water—the Gasi-gasi water—will be pleased to see the clan of Balfour mustering so thick around his standard.

I have (one serious word) been so lucky as to get a really secret interpreter, so all is for the best in our little adventure into the Waverley Novels.—I am, your affectionate cousin,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

Observe the stealth with which I have blotted my signature, but we must be political *à outrance*.

To the Countess of Jersey

My dear Cousin,—I send for your information a copy of my last letter to the gentleman in question. 'Tis thought more wise, in consideration of the difficulty and peril of the enterprise, that we should leave the town in the afternoon, and by several detachments. If you would start for a ride with the Master of Haggard and Captain Lockhart of Lee, say at three o'clock of the afternoon, you would make some rencounters by the wayside, which might be agreeable to your political opinions. All present will be staunch.

The Master of Haggard might extend his ride a little, and return through the marsh and by the nuns' house (I trust that has the proper flavour), so as a little to diminish the effect of separation.—I remain your affectionate cousin to command,

O Tusitala.

P. S.—It is to be thought this present year of grace will be historical.

To Sidney Colvin

Vailima [*August*, 1892]

My dear Colvin,—You will have no letter at all this nonth and it is really not my fault. I have been saving ny hand as much as possible for Davy Balfour; only his morning I was getting on first rate with him, vhen about half-past nine there came a prick in the niddle of the ball of my thumb, and I had to take o the left hand and two words a minute. I fear I lightly exaggerate the speed of my left hand; about word and a half in the minute—which is dispiriting o the last degree. Your last letter with the four xcellent reviews and the good news about *The Wrecker* as particularly welcome. I have already written to harles Baxter about the volume form appearance of

The Beach of Falesá. In spite of bad thumbs and other interruptions I hope to send to Baxter by this mail the whole first part (a good deal more than half) of David Balfour ready for press. This is pretty satisfactory, and I think ought to put us beyond the reach of financial catastrophe for the year.

A cousin of mine, Graham Balfour, arrived along with your last. It was rather a lark. Fanny, Belle, and I stayed down at the hotel two nights expecting the steamer, and we had seven horses down daily for the party and the baggage. These were on one occasion bossed by Austin, age eleven. "I'm afraid I cannot do that now," said he in answer to some communication, "as I am taking charge of the men here." In the course of the forenoon he took "his" men to get their lunch, and had his own by himself at the Chinese restaurant. What a day for a boy! The steamer came in at last on Saturday morning after breakfast. We three were out at the place of anchorage in the hotel boat as she came up, spotting rather anxiously for our guest, whom none of us had ever seen. We chose out some rather awful cads and tried to make up our mind to them; they were the least offensive yet observed among an awful crew of cabin passengers; but when the Simon Pure appeared at last upon the scene he was as nice a young fellow as you would want. Followed a time of giddy glory—one crowded hour of glorious life—when I figured about the deck with attendant shemales in the character of *the* local celebrity, was introduced to the least unpresentable of the ruffians on board, dogged about the deck by a diminutive Hebrew with a Kodak, the click of which kept time to my progress like a pair of castanets, and filled up in the Captain's room on iced champagne at 8.30 of God's morning. The Captain in question, Cap. Morse, is a great South Sea character, like the side of a house and the green-room of a music-hall, but with all the saving qualities of the seaman. The celebrity was a great success with this

untutored observer. He was kind enough to announce that he expected (rather with awe) a much more "thoughtful" person; and I think I pleased him much with my parting salutation, "Well, Captain, I suppose you and I are the two most notorious men in the Pacific." I think it will enable you to see the Captain if I tell you that he recited to us in cold blood the words of a new comic song; doubtless a tribute to my literary character. I had often heard of Captain Morse and always had detested all that I was told, and detested the man in confidence, just as you are doing; but really he has a wonderful charm of strength, loyalty, and simplicity. The whole celebrity business was particularly characteristic; the Captain has certainly never read a word of mine; and as for the Jew with the Kodak, he had never heard of me till he came on board. There was a third admirer who sent messages in to the Captain's cabin asking if the Lion would accept a gift of Webster's *Unabridged*. I went out to him and signified a manly willingness to accept a gift of anything. He stood and bowed before me, his eyes danced with excitement. "Mr. Stevenson," he said, and his voice trembled, "your name is very well known to me. I have been in the publishing line in Canada and I have handled many of your works for the trade."

"Come," I said, "here's a genuine appreciation."

From this gaudy scene we descended into the hotel boat with our new second cousin, got to horse and returned to Vailima, passing shot of Kodak once more on the Mulinuu bridge, where the little Jew was posted with his little Jew wife, each about three feet six in stature and as vulgar as a lodging-house clock.

We were just writing this when another passenger from the ship arrived up here at Vailima. This is a nice, quiet, simple, blue-eyed little boy of Pennsylvania Quaker folk. Threatened with consumption of my sort, he has been sent here by his doctor on the strength of my case. I am sure if the case be really

parallel he could not have been better done by. As we had a roast pig for dinner we kept him for that meal; and the rain coming on just when the moon should have risen, kept him again for the night. So you see it is now to-morrow.

Graham Balfour, the new cousin, and Lloyd are away with Clark the Missionary on a school inspecting *malaga,* really perhaps the prettiest little bit of opera in real life that can be seen, and made all the prettier by the actors being children. I have come to a collapse this morning on D. B.: wrote a chapter one way, half re-copied it in another, and now stand halting between the two like Buridan's donkey. These sorts of cruces always are to me the most insoluble, and I should not wonder if D. B. stuck there for a week or two. This is a bother, for I understand McClure talks of beginning serial publication in December. If this could be managed, what with D. B., the apparent success of *The Wrecker, Falesá,* and some little pickings from *Across the Plains*—not to mention, as quite hopeless, *The History of Samoa*—this should be rather a profitable year, as it must be owned it has been rather a busy one. The trouble is, if I miss the December publication, it may take the devil and all of a time to start another syndicate. I am really tempted to curse my conscientiousness. If I hadn't re-copied Davie he would now be done and dead and buried; and here I am stuck about the middle, with an immediate publication threatened and the fear before me of having after all to scamp the essential business of the end. At the same time, though I love my Davy, I am a little anxious to get on again on *The Young Chevalier.* I have in nearly all my works been trying one racket: to get out the facts of life as clean and naked and sharp as I could manage it. In this other book I want to try and megilp them together in an atmosphere of sentiment, and I wonder whether twenty-five years of life spent in trying this one thing will not make it impossible for me to suc-

ceed in the other. However, it is the only way to attempt a love story. You can't tell any of the facts, and the only chance is to paint an atmosphere.

It is a very warm morning—the parrot is asleep on the door (she heard her name, and immediately awakened)—and my brains are completely addled by having come to grief over Davy.

Hurray! a subject discovered! The parrot is a little white cockatoo of the small variety. It belongs to Belle, whom it guards like a watch-dog. It chanced that when she was sick some months ago I came over and administered some medicine. Unnccessary to say, Belle bleated, whereupon the parrot bounded upon me and buried his neb in my backside. From that day on the little wretch attacked me on every possible occasion, usually from the rear, though she would also follow me along the verandah and as I went downstairs attack my face. This was far from funny. I am a person of average courage, but I don't think I was ever more cordially afraid of anything than of this miserable atomy, and the deuce of it was that I could not but admire her appalling courage and there was no means of punishing such a thread-paper creature without destroying it entirely. Act II. On Graham's arrival I gave him my room and came out to Lloyd's in the lower floor of Belle's—I beg your pardon, the *parrot's*—house. The first morning I was to wake Belle early so that breakfast should be seen to for our guest. It was a mighty pretty dawn, the birds were singing extraordinary strong, all was peace, and there was the damned parrot hanging to the knob of Belle's door. Courage, my heart! On I went and Cockie buried her bill in the joint of my thumb. I believe that Job would have killed that bird; but I was more happily inspired—I caught it up and flung it over the verandah as far as I could throw. I must say it was violently done, and I looked with some anxiety to see in what state of preservation it would alight. Down it came, however, on its two feet, uttered

a few oaths in a very modified tone of voice, and set forth on the return journey to its mansion. Its wings being cut and its gait in walking having been a circumstance apparently not thoroughly calculated by its maker, it took about twenty-five minutes to get home again. Now here is this remarkable point—that bird has never bitten me since. When I have early breakfast she and the cat come down and join me, and she sits on the back of my chair. When I am at work with the door shut she sits outside and demolishes the door with that same beak which was so recently reddened with my heart's blood—and in the evening she does her business all over my clothes in the most friendly manner in the world. I ought to add a word about the parrot and the cat. Three cats were brought by Belle from Sydney. This one alone remains faithful and domestic. One of the funniest things I have ever seen was Polly and Maud over a piece of bacon. Polly stood on one leg, held the bacon in the other, regarded Maudie with a secret and sinister look and very slowly and quietly—far too quietly for the word I have to use—gnashed her bill at her. Maudie came up quite close; there she stuck—she was afraid to come nearer, to go away she was ashamed; and she assisted at the final and very deliberate consumption of the bacon, making about as poor a figure as a cat can make.

Next day.—Date totally unknown, or rather it is now known, but is reserved because it would certainly prove inconsistent with dates previously given. I went down about two o'clock in company with a couple of chance visitors to Apia. It was smoking hot, not a sign of any wind and the sun scorching your face. I found the great Haggard in hourly expectation of Lady Jersey, surrounded by crowds of very indifferent assistants, and I must honestly say—the only time I ever saw him so—cross. He directed my attention to all the new paint—his own handiwork, he said—and made me visit the bathroom which

he has just fixed up. I think I never saw a man more miserable and happy at the same time. Had some hock and a seltzer, went down town, met Fanny and Belle, and so home in time for a magnificent dinner of prawns and an eel cooked in oil, both from our own river.

This morning the overseer—the new overseer, Mr. Austin Strong—went down in charge of the pack-horses and a squad of men, himself riding a white horse with extreme dignity, and what seemed to onlookers a perhaps somewhat theatrical air of command. He returned triumphantly, all his commissions apparently executed with success, bringing us a mail—not your mail, Colonial ways—and the news of Lady Jersey's arrival and reception among flying flags and banging guns.

As soon as I had concluded my flattering description of Polly she bit one of my toes to the blood. But put not your trust in shemales, though to say the truth she looks more like a Russian colonel.

Aug. 15th.—On the Saturday night Fanny and I went down to Haggard's to dine and be introduced to Lady Jersey. She is there with her daughter, Lady Margaret, and her brother, Captain Leigh, a very nice kind of glass-in-his-eye kind of fellow. It is to be presumed I made a good impression, for the meeting has had a most extraordinary sequel. Fanny and I slept in Haggard's billiard-room, which happens to be Lloyd's bungalow. In the morning she and I breakfasted in the back parts with Haggard and Captain Leigh, and it was then arranged that the Captain should go with us to Malie on the Tuesday under a false name; so that Government House at Sydney might by no possibility be connected with a rebel camp. On Sunday afternoon up comes Haggard in a state of huge excitement. Lady J. insists on going too, in the character of my cousin; I write her a letter under the name of Miss Amelia Balfour, proposing the excursion; and this morning up comes a copy of

verses from Amelia. I wrote to Mataafa announcing that I should bring two cousins instead of one, that the second was a lady, unused to Samoan manners, and it would be a good thing if she could sleep in another house with Ralala. Sent a copy of this to Amelia, and at the same time made all arrangements, dating my letter 1745. We shall go on ahead on the Malie Road; she is to follow with Haggard and Captain Leigh, and overtake us at the ford of the Gasigasi, whence Haggard will return and the rest of us pursue our way to the rebeldom.

This lark is certainly huge. It is all nonsense that it can be concealed; Miss Amelia Balfour will be at once identified with the Queen of Sydney, as they call her; and I would not in the least wonder if the visit proved the signal of war. With this I have no concern, and the thing wholly suits my book and fits my predilections for Samoa. What a pity the mail leaves, and I must leave this adventure to be continued in our next! But I need scarcely say that all this is deadly private—I expect it all to come out, not without explosion; only it must not be through me or you. We had a visit yesterday from a person by the name of Count Nerli, who is said to be a good painter. Altogether the aristocracy clusters thick about us. In which radiant light, as the mail must now be really put up, I leave myself until next month.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

This letter tells without preface the story of the expedition planned in the preceding.

[*Vailima, August,* 1892]

My dear Colvin,—This is Friday night, the (I believe) 18th or 20th August or September. I shall probably regret to-morrow having written you with my own hand like the Apostle Paul. But I am alone over

here in the workman's house, where I and Belle and Lloyd and Austin are pigging; the rest are at cards in the main residence. I have not joined them because "belly belong me" has been kicking up, and I have just taken 15 drops of laudanum.

On Tuesday, the party set out—self in white cap, velvet coat, cords and yellow half boots, Belle in a white kind of suit and white cap to match mine, Lloyd in white clothes and long yellow boots and a straw hat, Graham in khakis and gaiters, Henry (my old overseer) in blue coat and black kilt, and the great Lafaele with a big ship-bag on his saddle-bow. We left the mail at the P.O., had lunch at the hotel, and about 1.50 set out westward to the place of tryst. This was by a little shrunken brook in a deep channel of mud, on the far side of which, in a thicket of low trees, all full of moths of shadow and butterflies of sun, we lay down to await her ladyship. Whisky and water, then a sketch of the encampment for which we all posed to Belle, passed off the time until 3.30. Then I could hold on no longer. 30 minutes late. Had the secret oozed out? Were they arrested? I got my horse, crossed the brook again, and rode hard back to the Vaea cross-roads, whence I was aware of white clothes glancing in the other long straight radius of the quadrant. I turned at once to return to the place of tryst; but D. overtook me, and almost bore me down, shouting "Ride, ride!" like a hero in a ballad. Lady Margaret and he were only come to shew the place; they returned, and the rest of our party, reinforced by Captain Leigh and Lady Jersey, set on for Malie. The delay was due to D.'s infinite precautions, leading them up lanes, by back ways, and then down again to the beach road a hundred yards farther on.

It was agreed that Lady Jersey existed no more; she was now my cousin Amelia Balfour. That relative and I headed the march; she is a charming woman, all of us like her extremely after trial on this some-

what rude and absurd excursion. And we Amelia'd or Miss Balfour'd her with great but intermittent fidelity. When we came to the last village, I sent Henry on ahead to warn the king of our approach and amend his discretion, if that might be. As he left I heard the villagers asking *which was the great lady?* And a little further, at the borders of Malie itself, we found the guard making a music of bugles and conches. Then I knew the game was up and the secret out. A considerable guard of honour, mostly children, accompanied us; but, for our good fortune, we had been looked for earlier, and the crowd was gone.

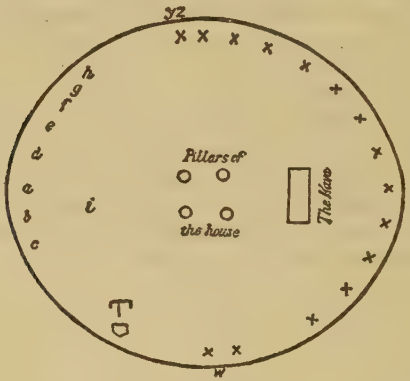
Dinner at the king's; he asked me to say grace, I could think of none—never could; Graham suggested *Benedictus Benedicat,* at which I leaped. We were nearly done, when old Popo inflicted the Atua howl (of which you have heard already) right at Lady Jersey's shoulder. She started in fine style.—"There," I said, "we have been giving you a chapter of Scott, but this goes beyond the Waverley Novels." After dinner, kava. Lady J. was served before me, and the king *drank last;* it was the least formal kava I ever saw in that house,—no names called, no show of ceremony. All my ladies are well trained, and when Belle drained her bowl, the king was pleased to clap his hands. Then he and I must retire for our private interview, to another house. He gave me his own staff and made me pass before him; and in the interview, which was long and delicate, he twice called me *afioga.* Ah, that leaves you cold, but I am Samoan enough to have been moved. *Susuga* is my accepted rank; to be called *afioga*—Heavens! what an advance and it leaves Europe cold. But it staggered my Henry. The first time it was complicated "lana susuga *ma* lana afioga—his excellency *and* his majesty"—the next time plain Majesty. Henry then begged to interrupt the interview and tell who he was—he is a small family chief in Savaii, not very small—"I do not wish the king," says he, "to think me a boy from Apia." On

our return to the palace, we separated. I had asked for the ladies to sleep alone—that was understood; but that Tusitala—his afioga Tusitala—should go out with the other young men, and not sleep with the high-born females of his family—was a doctrine received with difficulty. Lloyd and I had one screen, Graham and Leigh another, and we slept well.

In the morning I was first abroad before dawn: not very long, already there was a stir of birds. A little after I heard singing from the king's chapel—exceeding good—and went across in the hour when the east is yellow and the morning bank is breaking up, to hear it nearer. All about the chapel, the guards were posted, and all saluted Tusitala. I could not refrain from smiling: "So there is a place too," I thought, "where sentinels salute me." Mine has been a queer life.

Breakfast was rather a protracted business. And that was scarce over when we were called to the great house (now finished—recall your earlier letters) to see a royal kava. This function is of rare use; I know grown Samoans who have never witnessed it. It is, besides, as you are to hear, a piece of prehistoric history, crystallised in figures, and the facts largely forgotten; an acted hieroglyph. The house is really splendid; in the rafters in the midst, two carved and coloured model birds are posted; the only thing of the sort I have ever remarked in Samoa, the Samoans being literal observers of the second commandment. At one side of the egg our party sat. a=Mataafa, b=Lady J., c=Belle, d=Tusitala, e=Graham, f=Lloyd, g=Captain Leigh, h=Henry, i=Popo. The x's round are the high chiefs, each man in his historical position. One side of the house is set apart for the king alone; we were allowed there as his guests and Henry as our interpreter. It was a huge trial to the lad, when a speech was made to me which he must translate, and I made a speech in answer which he had to orate, full-breathed, to that big circle; he blushed through his dark skin, but looked and acted like a

gentleman and a young fellow of sense; then the kava came to the king; he poured one drop in libation, drank another, and flung the remainder outside the house behind him. Next came the turn of the old shapeless stone marked T. It stands for one of the king's titles, Tamasoalii; Mataafa is Tamasoalii this day, but cannot drink for it; and the stone must first be washed with water, and then have the bowl emptied on it. Then—the order I cannot recall—came the turn of y and z, two orators of the name of Malietoa; the first



took his kava down plain, like an ordinary man: the second must be packed to bed under a big sheet of tapa, and be massaged by anxious assistants and rise on his elbow groaning to drink his cup. W., a great hereditary war man, came next; five times the cup-bearers marched up and down the house and passed the cup on, five times it was filled and the General's name and titles heralded at the bowl, and five times he refused it (after examination) as too small. It is said this commemorates a time when Malietoa at the head of his army suffered much for want of supplies. Then this same military gentleman must *drink* five cups, one from each of the great names: all which

took a precious long time. He acted very well, haughtily and in a society tone *outlining* the part. The difference was marked when he subsequently made a speech in his own character as a plain God-fearing chief. A few more high chiefs, then Tusitala; one more, and then Lady Jersey; one more, and then Captain Leigh, and so on with the rest of our party—Henry of course excepted. You see in public, Lady Jersey followed me—just so far was the secret kept.

Then we came home; Belle, Graham, and Lloyd, to the Chinaman's, I with Lady Jersey, to lunch; so, severally home. Thursday I have forgotten: Saturday, I began again on Davie; on Sunday, the Jersey party came up to call and carried me to dinner. As I came out, to ride home, the searchlights of the *Curaçoa* were lightening on the horizon from many miles away, and next morning she came in. Tuesday was huge fun: a reception at Haggard's. All our party dined there; Lloyd and I, in the absence of Haggard and Leigh, had to play aide-de-camp and host for about twenty minutes, and I presented the population of Apia at random but (luck helping) without one mistake. Wednesday we had two middies to lunch. Thursday we had Eeles and Hoskyn (lieutenant and doctor—very, very nice fellows—simple, good and not the least dull) to dinner. Saturday, Graham and I lunched on board; Graham, Belle, Lloyd dined at the G.'s; and Austin and the *whole* of our servants went with them to an evening entertainment; the more bold returning by lantern-light. Yesterday, Sunday, Belle and I were off about half-past eight, left our horses at a public house, and went on board the *Curaçoa* in the wardroom skiff; were entertained in the wardroom; thence on deck to the service, which was a great treat; three fiddles and a harmonium and excellent choir, and the great ship's company joining: on shore in Haggard's big boat to lunch with the party. Thence all together to Vailima, where we read aloud a Ouida Romance we have been secretly writing; in which Haggard

was the hero, and each one of the authors had to draw a portrait of him or herself in a Ouida light. Leigh, Lady J., Fanny, R. L. S., Belle and Graham were the authors.

In the midst of this gay life, I have finally recopied two chapters, and drafted for the first time three of *Davie Balfour*. But it is not a life that would continue to suit me, and if I have not continued to write to you, you will scarce wonder. And to-day we all go down again to dinner, and to-morrow they all come up to lunch. The world is too much with us. But it now nears an end, to-day already the *Curaçoa* has sailed; and on Saturday or Sunday Lady Jersey will follow them in the mail steamer. I am sending you a wire by her hands as far as Sydney, that is to say either you or Cassell, about *Falesá;* I will not allow it to be called *Uma* in book form, that is not the logical name of the story. Nor can I have the marriage contract omitted; and the thing is full of misprints abominable. In the picture, Uma is rot; so is the old man and the negro; but Wiltshire is splendid, and Case will do. It seems badly illuminated, but this may be printing. How have I seen this first number? Not through your attention, guilty one! Lady Jersey had it, and only mentioned it yesterday.*

I ought to say how much we all like the Jersey party. Leigh is very amusing in his way. Lady Margaret is a charming girl. And Lady Jersey is in all ways admirable, so unfussy, so plucky, so very kind and gracious. My boy Henry was enraptured with the manners of the *Tawaitai Sili* (chief lady). Among our other occupations, I did a bit of a supposed epic describing our tryst at the ford of the Gasi-gasi; and Belle and I made a little book of caricatures and verses about incidents on the visit.

Tuesday.—The wild round of gaiety continues. After I had written to you yesterday, the brain being wholly

*I had not cared to send him the story as thus docked and rechristened in its serial shape.

extinct, I played piquet all morning with Graham. After lunch down to call on the U.S. consul, hurt in a steeplechase; thence back to the new girls' school which Lady J. was to open, and where my ladies met me. Lady J. is really an orator, with a voice of gold; the rest of us played our unremarked parts; missionaries, Haggard, myself, a Samoan chief, holding forth in turn; myself with (at least) a golden brevity. Thence, Fanny, Belle, and I to town, to our billiard-room in Haggard's back garden, where we found Lloyd and where Graham joined us. The three men first dressed, with the ladies in a corner; and then, to leave them a free field, we went off to Haggard and Leigh's quarters, whereafter all to dinner, where our two parties, a brother of Colonel Kitchener's, a passing globe-trotter, and Clarke the missionary. A very gay evening, with all sorts of chaff and mirth, and a moonlit ride home, and to bed before 12.30. And now to-day, we have the Jersey-Haggard troupe to lunch, and I must pass the morning dressing ship.

Thursday, Sept. 1*st.*—I sit to write to you now, 7.15, all the world in bed except myself, accounted for, and Belle and Graham, down at Haggard's at dinner. Not a leaf is stirring here; but the moon overhead (now of a good bigness) is obscured and partly revealed in a whirling covey of thin storm-clouds. By Jove, it blows above.

From 8 till 11.15 on Tuesday, I dressed ship, and in particular cleaned crystal, my specialty. About 11.30 the guests began to arrive before I was dressed, and between while I had written a parody for Lloyd to sing. Yesterday, Wednesday, I had to start out about 3 for town, had a long interview with the head of the German firm about some work in my new house, got over to Lloyd's billiard-room about six, on the way whither I met Fanny and Belle coming down with one Kitchener, a brother of the Colonel's. Dined in the billiard-room, discovered we had forgot to order oatmeal; whereupon, in the moonlit evening, I set forth

in my tropical array, mess jacket and such, to get the oatmeal, and meet a young fellow C.—and not a bad young fellow either, only an idiot—as drunk as Crœsus. He wept with me, he wept for me; he talked like a bad character in an impudently bad farce; I could have laughed aloud to hear, and could make you laugh by repeating, but laughter was not uppermost.

This morning at about seven, I set off after the lost sheep. I could have no horse; all that could be mounted—we have one girth-sore and one dead-lame in the establishment—were due at a picnic about 10.30. The morning was very wet, and I set off barefoot, with my trousers over my knees, and a mackintosh. Presently I had to take a side path in the bush; missed it; came forth in a great oblong patch of taro solemnly surrounded by forest—no soul, no sign, no sound—and as I stood there at a loss, suddenly between the showers out broke the note of a harmonium and a woman's voice singing an air that I know very well, but have (as usual) forgot the name of. 'Twas from a great way off, but seemed to fill the world. It was strongly romantic, and gave me a point which brought me, by all sorts of forest wading, to an open space of palms. These were of all ages, but mostly at that age when the branches arch from the ground level, range themselves, with leaves exquisitely green. The whole interspace was overgrown with convolvulus, purple, yellow, and white, often as deep as to my waist, in which I floundered aimlessly. The very mountain was invisible from here. The rain came and went; now in sunlit April showers, now with the proper tramp and rattle of the tropics. All this while I met no sight or sound of man, except the voice which was now silent, and a damned pig-fence that headed me off at every corner. Do you know barbed wire? Think of a fence of it on rotten posts, and you barefoot. But I crossed it at last with my heart in my mouth and no harm done. Thence at last to C.'s: no C. Next place I came to was in the zone of woods. They offered me

a buggy and set a black boy to wash my legs and feet. "Washum legs belong that fellow white-man" was the command. So at last I ran down my son of a gun in the hotel, sober, and with no story to tell; penitent, I think. As I sat and looked at him, I knew from my inside the biggest truth in life: there is only one thing that we cannot forgive, and that is ugliness—*our* ugliness. There is no ugliness, no beauty only that which makes me (*ipse*) sicken or rejoice. And poor C. makes me sicken. Yet, according to canons, he is not amiss. Home, by buggy and my poor feet, up three miles of root, boulder, gravel, and liquid mud, slipping back at every step.

Sunday, Sept. 4th.—Hope you will be able to read a word of the last, no joke writing by a bad lantern with a groggy hand and your glasses mislaid. Not that the hand is not better, as you see by the absence of the amanuensis hitherto. Mail came Friday, and a communication from yourself much more decent than usual, for which I thank you. Glad *The Wrecker* should so hum; but Lord, what fools these mortals be!

So far yesterday, the citation being wrung from me by remembrance of many reviews. I have now received all *Falesá*, and my admiration for that tale rises; I believe it is in some ways my best work; I am pretty sure, at least, I have never done anything better than Wiltshire.

Monday, 12th September, 1892.—On Wednesday the Spinsters of Apia gave a ball to a select crowd. Fanny, Belle, Lloyd, and I rode down, met Haggard by the way and joined company with him. Dinner with Haggard, and thence to the ball. The Chief Justice appeared; it was immediately remarked, and whispered from one to another, that he and I had the only red sashes in the room,—and they were both of the hue of blood, sir, blood. He shook hands with myself and all the members of my family. Then the cream came, and I found myself in the same set of a quadrille with his honour. We dance here in Apia a most fear-

ful and wonderful quadrille, I don't know where the devil they fished it from; but it is rackety and prancing and embraceatory beyond words; perhaps it is best defined in Haggard's expression of a gambado. When I and my great enemy found ourselves involved in this gambol, and crossing hands, and kicking up, and being embraced almost in common by large and quite respectable females, we—or I—tried to preserve some rags of dignity, but not for long. The deuce of it is that, personally, I love this man; his eye speaks to me, I am pleased in his society. We exchanged a glance, and then a grin; the man took me in his confidence; and through the remainder of that prance we pranced for each other. Hard to imagine any position more ridiculous; a week before he had been trying to rake up evidence against me by brow-beating and threatening a half-white interpreter; that very morning I had been writing most villainous attacks upon him for the *Times;* and we meet and smile, and damn it—! like each other. I do my best to damn the man and drive him from these islands; but the weakness endures—I love him. This is a thing I would despise in anybody else; but he is so jolly insidious and ingratiating! No, sir, I can't dislike him; but if I don't make hay of him, it shall not be for want of trying.

Yesterday, we had two Germans and a young American boy to lunch; and in the afternoon, Vailima was in a state of siege; ten white people on the front verandah, at least as many brown in the cook house, and countless blacks to see the black boy Arrick.

Which reminds me, Arrick was sent Friday was a week to the German firm with a note, and was not home on time. Lloyd and I were going bedward, it was late with a bright moon—ah, poor dog, you know no such moons as these!—when home came Arrick with his head in a white bandage and his eyes shining. He had had a fight with other blacks, Malaita boys; many against one, and one with a knife: "I

KNICKED 'EM DOWN, three four!" he cried; and had himself to be taken to the doctor's and bandaged. Next day, he could not work, glory of battle swelled too high in his threadpaper breast; he had made a one-stringed harp for Austin, borrowed it, came to Fanny's room, and sang war-songs and danced a war-dance in honour of his victory. And it appears, by subsequent advices, that it was a serious victory enough; four of his assailants went to hospital, and one is thought in danger. All Vailima rejoiced at this news.

Five more chapters of *David,* 22 to 27, go to Baxter. All love affair; seems pretty good to me. Will it do for the young person? I don't know; since the *Beach,* I know nothing, except that men are fools and hypocrites; and I know less of them than I was fond enough to fancy.

To Mrs. Charles Fairchild

[*Vailima, August,* 1892]

My dear Mrs. Fairchild,—Thank you a thousand times for your letter. You are the Angel of (the sort of) Information (that I care about); I appoint you successor to the newspaper press; and I beg of you, whenever you wish to gird at the age, or think the bugs out of proportion to the roses, or despair, or enjoy any cosmic or epochal emotion, to sit down again and write to the Hermit of Samoa. What do I think of it all? Well, I love the romantic solemnity of youth; and even in this form, although not without laughter, I have to love it still. They are such ducks! But what are they made of? We were just as solemn as that about atheism and the stars and humanity; but we were all for belief anyway—we held atheism and sociology (of which none of us, nor indeed anybody, knew anything) for a gospel and an iron rule of life; and it was lucky enough, or there would have been more windows broken. What is apt to puzzle one at first sight in the New Youth is that,

with such rickety and risky problems always at heart, they should not plunge down a Niagara of Dissolution. But let us remember the high practical timidity of youth. I was a particularly brave boy—this I think of myself, looking back—and plunged into adventures and experiments, and ran risks that it still surprises me to recall. But, dear me, what a fear I was in of that strange blind machinery in the midst of which I stood; and with what a compressed heart and what empty lungs I would touch a new crank and await developments! I do not mean to say I do not fear life still; I do; and that terror (for an adventurer like myself) is still one of the chief joys of living.

But it was different indeed, while I was yet girt with the priceless robes of inexperience; then the fear was exquisite and infinite. And so, when you see all these little Ibsens, who seem at once so dry and so excitable, and faint in swathes over a play (I suppose—for a wager) that would seem to me merely tedious, smile behind your hand, and remember the little dears are all in a blue funk. It must be very funny, and to a spectator like yourself I almost envy it. But never get desperate; human nature is human nature; and the Roman Empire, since the Romans founded it and made our European human nature what it is, bids fair to go on and to be true to itself. These little bodies will all grow up and become men and women, and have heaps of fun; nay, and are having it now; and whatever happens to the fashion of the age, it makes no difference—there are always high and brave and amusing lives to be lived; and a change of key, however exotic, does not exclude melody. Even Chinamen, hard as we find it to believe, enjoy being Chinese. And the Chinaman stands alone to be unthinkable; natural enough, as the representative of the only other great civilisation. Take my people here at my doors; their life is a very good one; it is quite thinkable, quite acceptable to us. And the little dears will be soon skating on the other foot; sooner or later,

in each generation, the one-half of them at least begin to remember all the material they had rejected when first they made and nailed up their little theory of life; and these become reactionaries or conservatives, and the ship of man begins to fill upon the other tack.

Here is a sermon, by your leave! It is your own fault, you have amused and interested me so much by your breath of the New Youth, which comes to me from so far away, where I live up here in my mountain, and secret messengers bring me letters from rebels, and the government sometimes seizes them, and generally grumbles in its beard that Stevenson should really be deported. O my life is the more lively, never fear!

It has recently been most amusingly varied by a visit from Lady Jersey. I took her over mysteriously (under the pseudonym of my cousin, Miss Amelia Balfour) to visit Mataafa, our rebel; and we had great fun, and wrote a Ouida novel on our life here, in which every author had to describe himself in the Ouida glamour, and of which—for the Jerseys intend printing it—I must let you have a copy. My wife's chapter, and my description of myself, should, I think, amuse you. But there were finer touches still; as when Belle and Lady Jersey came out to brush their teeth in front of the rebel king's palace, and the night guard squatted opposite on the grass and watched the process; or when I and my interpreter, and the king with his secretary, mysteriously disappeared to conspire.—Ever yours sincerely, R. L. STEVENSON.

TO THE CHILDREN IN THE CELLAR

This time the children in the Kilburn cellar are addressed direct, with only a brief word at the end of their instructress.

Vailima Plantation, Samoan Islands,
September 4th, 1892

DEAR CHILDREN IN THE CELLAR,—I told you before something of the black boys who come here for work

on the plantations, and some of whom run away and live a wild life in the forests of the islands. Now I want to tell you of one who lived in the house of the lean man. Like the rest of them here, he is a little fellow, and when he goes about in old, battered, cheap European clothes looks very small and shabby. When first he came he was as lean as a tobacco-pipe, and his smile (like that of almost all the others) was the sort that makes you half wish to smile yourself, and half wish to cry. However, the boys in the kitchen took him in hand and fed him up. They would set him down alone to table and wait upon him till he had his fill, which was a good long time to wait; and the first thing we noticed was that his little stomach began to stick out like a pigeon's breast; and then the food got a little wider spread and he started little calves to his legs; and last of all he began to get quite saucy and impudent, so that we could know what sort of a fellow he really was when he was no longer afraid of being thrashed. He is really what you ought to call a young man, though I suppose nobody in the whole world wide has any idea of his age; and, as far as his behaviour goes, you can only think of him as a big little child with a good deal of sense. When Austin built his fort against the Indians, Arick (for that is the black boy's name) liked nothing so much as to help him. And this is very funny when you think that of all the dangerous savages in this island Arick is one of the most dangerous. The other day, besides, he made Austin a musical instrument of the sort they use in his own country, a harp with only one string. He took a stick about three feet long, and perhaps four inches round. The under side he hollowed out in a deep trench to serve as sounding box; the two ends of the upper side he made to curve upward like the ends of a canoe, and between these he stretched the single string. He plays upon it with a match or a little piece of stick, and sings to it songs of his own country, of which no person here can understand a single word, and which are very

likely all about fighting with his enemies in battle, and killing them, and I am sorry to say cooking them in a ground oven and eating them for supper when the fight is over.

For Arick is really what you might call a savage, though a savage is a very different person in reality, and a very much nicer, from what he is made to appear in little books. He is the sort of person that everybody smiles to, or makes faces at, or gives a smack to as he goes by; the sort of person that all the girls on the plantation give the best seat to, and help first, and love to decorate with flowers and ribbons, and yet all the while are laughing at him; the sort of person who likes best to play with Austin, and whom Austin perhaps (when he is allowed) likes best to play with. He is all grins and giggles, and little steps out of dances, and little droll ways, to attract people's attention and set them laughing. And yet when you come to look at him closer, you will find that his body is all covered with scars. This was when he was a child. There was a war, as is the way in these wild islands, between his village and the next, much as if there were war in London between one street and another; and all the children ran about playing in the middle of the trouble, and I dare say took no more notice of the war than you children in London do of a general election. But sometimes, at general elections, English children may get run over by processions in the street; and it chanced that as little Arick was running about in the bush, and very busy about his playing, he ran into the midst of the warriors on the other side. These speared him with a poisoned spear; and his own people, when they had found him lying for dead, and in order to cure him of the poison, cut him up with knives that were probably made of fish-bones.

This is a very savage piece of child-life, and Arick, for all his good-nature, is still a very savage person. I have told you how the black boys sometimes run away from the plantations, and live behind alone in the

forest, building little sheds to protect them from the rain, and sometimes planting little gardens of food, but for the most part living the best they can upon the nuts of the trees and yams that they dig with their hands out of the earth. I do not think there can be anywhere in the world people more wretched than these runaways. They cannot return, for they would only return to be punished. They can never hope to see again their own land or their own people—indeed, I do not know what they can hope, but just to find enough yams every day to keep them from starvation. And in the wet season of the year, which is our summer and your winter and the rain falls day after day far harder and louder than the loudest thunder-plump that ever fell in England, and the noon is sometimes so dark that the lean man is glad to light his lamp to write by, I can think of nothing so dreary as the state of these poor runaway slaves in the houseless bush. You are to remember, besides, that the people of this island hate and fear them because they are cannibals, sit and tell tales of them about their lamps at night in their own comfortable houses, and are sometimes afraid to lie down to sleep if they think there is a lurking black boy in the neighbourhood. Well, now, Arick is of their own race and language, only he is a little more lucky because he has not run away; and how do you think that he proposed to help them? He asked if he might not have a gun. "What do you want with a gun, Arick?" was asked. And he said quite simply, and with his nice good-natured smile, that if he had a gun he would go up into the high bush and shoot black boys as men shoot pigeons. He said nothing about eating them, nor do I think he really meant to. I think all he wanted was to clear the property of vermin as game keepers at home kill weasels, or housewives mice.

The other day he was sent down on an errand to the German firm where many of the black boys live. It was very late when he came home on a bright moonlight night. He had a white bandage round his head,

his eyes shone, and he could scarcely speak for excitement. It seems some of the black boys who were his enemies at home had attacked him, and one with a knife. By his own account he had fought very well, but the odds were heavy; the man with the knife had cut him both in the head and back, he had been struck down, and if some of the black boys of his own side had not come to the rescue, he must certainly have been killed. I am sure no Christmas-box could make any of you children so happy as this fight made Arick. A great part of the next day he neglected his work to play upon the one-stringed harp and sing songs about his great victory. And to-day, when he is gone upon his holiday, he has announced that he is going back to the German firm to have another battle and another triumph. I do not think he will go all the same, or I should be more uneasy, for I do not want to have my Arick killed; and there is no doubt that if he begins to fight again, he will be likely to go on with it very far. For I have seen him once when he saw, or thought he saw, an enemy. It was one of our dreadful days of rain, the sound of it like a great waterfall or like a tempest of wind blowing in the forest; and there came to our door two runaway black boys seeking work. In such weather as that my enemy's dog (as Shakespeare says) should have had a right to shelter. But when Arick saw these two poor rogues coming with their empty bellies and drenched clothes, and one of them with a stolen cutlass in his hand, through that world of falling water, he had no thought of pity in his heart. Crouching behind one of the pillars of the verandah, which he held in his two hands, his mouth drew back into a strange sort of smile, his eyes grew bigger and bigger, and his whole face was just like the one word Murder in big capitals.

Now I have told you a great deal too much about poor Arick's savage nature, and now I must tell you about a great amusement he had the other day. There came an English ship of war in the harbour, and the

officers very good-naturedly gave an entertainment of songs and dances and a magic-lantern, to which Arick and Austin were allowed to go. At the door of the hall there were crowds of black boys waiting and trying to peep in, the way children at home lie about and peep under the tent of a circus; and you may be sure Arick was a very proud person when he passed them all by and entered the hall with his ticket. I wish I knew what he thought of the whole performance; but the housekeeper of the lean man, who sat just in front of him, tells me what seemed to startle him the most. The first thing was when two of the officers came out with blackened faces like Christy minstrel boys and began to dance. Arick was sure that they were really black and his own people, and he was wonderfully surprised to see them dance this new European style of dance. But the great affair was the magic-lantern. The hall was made quite dark, which was very little to Arick's taste. He sat there behind the housekeeper, nothing to be seen of him but eyes and teeth, and his heart beating finely in his little scarred breast. And presently there came out on the white sheet that great bright eye of light that I am sure all you children must have often seen. It was quite new to Arick, he had no idea what would happen next; and in his fear and excitement, he laid hold with his little slim black fingers like a bird's claws on the neck of the housekeeper in front of him. All through the rest of the show, as one picture followed another on the white sheet, he sat there gasping and clutching at the housekeeper's neck, and goodness knows whether he were more pleased or frightened. Doubtless it was a very fine thing to see all these bright pictures coming out and dying away again one after another; but doubtless it was rather alarming also, for how was it done? And at last, when there appeared upon the screen the head of a black woman (as it might be his own mother or sister), and the black woman of a sudden began to roll her eyes, the fear or the excitement, whichever it was,

wrung out of him a loud shuddering sob. And I think we all ought to admire his courage when, after an evening spent in looking on at such wonderful miracles, he and Austin set out alone through the forest to the lean man's house. It was late at night and pitch dark when some of the party overtook the little white boy and the big black boy marching among the trees with their lantern. I have told you the wood has an ill name; and all the people of the island believe it to be full of devils; but even if you do not believe in the devils, it is a pretty dreadful place to walk in by the moving light of a lantern, with nothing about you but a curious whirl of shadows and the black night above and beyond. But Arick kept his courage up, and I daresay Austin's too, with a perpetual chatter, so that the people coming after heard his voice long before they saw the shining of the lantern.

My dear Miss Boodle,—will I be asking too much that you should send me back my letters to the Children, or copies, if you prefer; I have an idea that they may perhaps help in time to make up a book on the South Seas for children. I have addressed the Cellar so long this time that you must take this note for yourself and excuse, yours most sincerely,

R. L. STEVENSON.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

Thursday, 15th September [1892]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—On Tuesday, we had our young adventurer * ready, and Fanny, Belle, he and I set out about three of a dark, deadly hot, and deeply unwholesome afternoon. Belle had the lad behind her; I had a pint of champagne in either pocket, a parcel in my hands, and as Jack had a girth sore and I rode without a girth, I might be said to occupy a very unstrategic position. On the way down, a little dreary, beastly

* Austin Strong on his way to school in California.

drizzle beginning to come out of the darkness, Fanny put up an umbrella, her horse bounded, reared, cannoned into me, cannoned into Belle and the lad, and bolted for home. It really might and ought to have been an A 1 catastrophe; but nothing happened beyond Fanny's nerves being a good deal shattered; of course, she could not tell what had happened to us until she got her horse mastered.

Next day, Haggard went off to the Commission and left us in charge of his house; all our people came down in wreaths of flowers; we had a boat for them; Haggard had a flag in the Commission boat for us; and when at last the steamer turned up, the young adventurer was carried on board in great style, with a new watch and chain, and about three pound ten of tips, and five big baskets of fruit as free-will offerings to the captain. Captain Morse had us all to lunch; champagne flowed, so did compliments; and I did the affable celebrity life-sized. It made a great send-off for the young adventurer. As the boat drew off, he was standing at the head of the gangway, supported by three handsome ladies—one of them a real full-blown beauty, Madame Green, the singer—and looking very engaging himself, between smiles and tears. Not that he cried in public. My, but we were a tired crowd! However, it is always a blessing to get home, and this time it was a sort of wonder to ourselves that we got back alive. Casualties: Fanny's back jarred, horse incident; Belle, bad headache, tears and champagne; self, idiocy, champagne, fatigue; Lloyd, ditto, ditto. As for the adventurer, I believe he will have a delightful voyage for his little start in life. But there is always something touching in a mite's first launch.

Date unknown.—I am now well on with the third part of the *Débâcle.** The two first I liked much; the second completely knocking me; so far as it has gone, this third part appears the ramblings of a dull man who has forgotten what he has to say—he reminds me

*By Émile Zola.

of an M.P. But Sedan was really great, and I will pick no holes. The batteries under fire, the red-cross folk, the county charge—perhaps, above all, Major Bouroche and the operations, all beyond discussion; and every word about the Emperor splendid.

September 30th.—*David Balfour* done, and its author along with it, or nearly so. Strange to think of even our doctor here repeating his nonsense about debilitating climate. Why, the work I have been doing the last twelve months, in one continuous spate, mostly with annoying interruptions and without any collapse to mention, would be incredible in Norway. But I *have* broken down now, and will do nothing as long as I possibly can. With *David Balfour* I am very well pleased; in fact these labours of the last year—I mean *Falesá* and *D. B.*, not *Samoa*, of course—seem to me to be nearer what I mean than anything I have ever done: nearer what I mean by fiction; the nearest thing before was *Kidnapped.* I am not forgetting *The Master of Ballantrae*, but that lacked all pleasurableness, and hence was imperfect in essence. So you see, if I am a little tired, I do not repent.

The third part of the *Débâcle* may be all very fine; but I cannot read it. It suffers from *impaired vitality*, and *uncertain aim;* two deadly sicknesses. Vital—that's what I am at, first, wholly vital, with a buoyancy of life. Then lyrical, if it may be, and picturesque, always with an epic value of scenes, so that the figures remain in the mind's eye for ever.

October 8th.—Suppose you sent us some of the catalogues of the parties what vends statues? I don't want colossal Herculeses, but about quarter size and less. If the catalogues were illustrated it would probably be found a help to weak memories. These may be found to alleviate spare moments when we sometimes amuse ourselves by thinking how fine we shall make the palace if we do not go pop. Perhaps in the same way it might amuse you to send us any pattern of wall paper that might strike you as cheap, pretty, and suitable

for a room in a hot and extremely bright climate. It should be borne in mind that our climate can be extremely dark too. Our sitting-room is to be in varnished wood. The room I have particularly in mind is a sort of bed and sitting-room, pretty large, lit on three sides, and the colour in favour of its proprietor at present is a topazy yellow. But then with what colour to relieve it? For a little work-room of my own at the back, I should rather like to see some patterns of unglossy—well, I'll be hanged if I can describe this red—it's not Turkish and it's not Roman and it's not Indian, but it seems to partake of the two last, and yet it can't be either of them, because it ought to be able to go with vermilion. Ah, what a tangled web we weave—anyway, with what brains you have left choose me and send me some—many—patterns of this exact shade.

A few days ago it was Haggard's birthday and we had him and his cousin to dinner—bless me if I ever told you of his cousin!—he is here anyway, and a fine, pleasing specimen, so that we have concluded (after our own happy experience) that the climate of Samoa must be favourable to cousins.* Then we went out on the verandah in a lovely moonlight, drinking port, hearing the cousin play and sing, till presently we were informed that our boys had got up a siva in Lafaele's house to which we were invited. It was entirely their own idea. The house, you must understand, is one-half floored, and one-half bare earth, and the daïs stands a little over knee high above the level of the soil. The daïs was the stage, with three footlights. We audience sat on mats on the floor, and the cook and three of our work boys, sometimes assisted by our two ladies, took their places behind the footlights and began a topical Vailima song. The burden was of course that of a Samoan popular song about a white

* The reference is to the writer's maternal cousin, Mr. Graham Balfour (*Samoicè*, "Pelema"), who during these months and again later was an inmate of the home at Vailima.

man who objects to all that he sees in Samoa. And there was of course a special verse for each one of the party—Lloyd was called the dancing man (practically the Chief's handsome son) of Vailima; he was also, in his character I suppose of overseer, compared to a policeman—Belle had that day been the almoner in a semi-comic distribution of wedding rings and thimbles (bought cheap at an auction) to the whole plantation company, fitting a ring on every man's finger, and a ring and a thimble on both the women's. This was very much in character with her native name *Teuila*, the adorner of the ugly—so of course this was the point of her verse and at a given moment all the performers displayed the rings upon their fingers. Pelema (the cousin—*our* cousin) was described as watching from the house and whenever he saw any boy not doing anything, running and doing it himself. Fanny's verse was less intelligible, but it was accompanied in the dance with a pantomime of terror well-fitted to call up her haunting, indefatigable, and diminutive presence in a blue gown.

To Gordon Browne

Vailima, Samoa, Autumn, 1892

To the Artist who did the illustrations to "Uma":

Dear Sir,—I only know you under the initials G. B., but you have done some exceedingly spirited and satisfactory illustrations to my story *The Beach of Falesá*, and I wish to write and thank you expressly for the care and talent shown. Such numbers of people can do good black and whites! So few can illustrate a story, or apparently read it. You have shown that you can do both, and your creation of Wiltshire is a real illumination of the text. It was exactly so that Wiltshire dressed and looked, and you have the line of his nose to a nicety. His nose is an inspiration. Nor should I forget to thank you for Case, particularly

in his last appearance. It is a singular fact—which seems to point still more directly to inspiration in your case—that your missionary actually resembles the flesh-and-blood person from whom Mr. Tarleton was drawn. The general effect of the islands is all that could be wished; indeed I have but one criticism to make, that in the background of Case taking the dollar from Mr. Tarleton's head—head—not hand, as the fools have printed it—the natives have a little too much the look of Africans.

But the great affair is that you have been to the pains to illustrate my story instead of making conscientious black and whites of people sitting talking. I doubt if you have left unrepresented a single pictorial incident. I am writing by this mail to the editor in the hopes that I may buy from him the originals, and I am, dear sir, your very much obliged,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Miss Morse

The next is an answer to an acknowledgment from a lady in the United States, one of many similar which he from time to time received, of help and encouragement derived from his writings.

Vailima, Samoan Islands, October 7th, 1892

DEAR MADAM,—I have a great diffidence in answering your valued letter. It would be difficult for me to express the feelings with which I read it—and am now trying to re-read it as I dictate this.

You ask me to forgive what you say "must seem a liberty," and I find that I cannot thank you sufficiently or even find a word with which to qualify your letter. Dear Madam, such a communication even the vainest man would think a sufficient reward for a lifetime of labour. That I should have been able to give so much help and pleasure to your sister is the subject of my grateful wonder.

That she, being dead, and speaking with your pen,

should be able to repay the debt with such a liberal interest, is one of those things that reconcile us with the world and make us take hope again. I do not know what I have done to deserve so beautiful and touching a compliment; and I feel there is but one thing fit for me to say here, that I will try with renewed courage to go on in the same path, and to deserve, if not to receive, a similar return from others.

You apologise for speaking so much about yourselves. Dear Madam, I thought you did so too little. I should have wished to have known more of those who were so sympathetic as to find a consolation in my work and so graceful and so tactful as to acknowledge it in such a letter as was yours.

Will you offer to your mother the expression of a sympathy which (coming from a stranger) must seem very airy, but which yet is genuine; and accept for yourself my gratitude for the thought which inspired you to write to me and the words which you found to express it.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TO MISS TAYLOR

Lady Taylor had died soon after the settlement of the Stevenson family at Vailima. The second paragraph refers to a test which had been set before an expert in the reading of character by handwriting.

Vailima, Samoan Islands, October 7th, 1892

MY DEAR IDA,—I feel very much the implied reproof in yours just received; but I assure you there is no fear of our forgetting either Una or yourself, or your dear mother, who was one of the women I have most admired and loved in the whole of my way through life. The truth is Fanny writes to nobody and that I am on the whole rather overworked. I compose lots of letters to lots of unforgotten friends, but when it comes to taking the pen between my fingers there are many impediments. Hence it comes that I am now writing to

you by an amanuensis, at which I know you will be very angry. Well, it was Hobson's choice. A little while ago I had very bad threatenings of scrivener's cramp; and if Belle (Fanny's daughter, of whom you remember to have heard) had not taken up the pen for my correspondence, I doubt you would never have heard from me again except in the way of books. I wish you and Una would be so good as to write to us now and then even without encouragement. An unsolicited letter would be almost certain (sooner or later, depending on the activity of the conscience) to produce some sort of an apology for an answer.

All this upon one condition: that you send me your friend's description of my looks, age, and character. The character of my work I am not so careful about. But did you ever hear of anything so tantalising as for you to tell me the story and not send me your notes? I expect it was a device to extract an answer; and, as you see, it has succeeded. Let me suggest (if your friend be handy) that the present letter would be a very delicate test. It is in one person's handwriting, it expresses the ideas of another, of the writer herself you know nothing. I should be very curious to know what the sibyl will make of such a problem.

If you carry out your design of settling in London you must be sure and let us have the new address. I swear we shall write some time—and if the interval be long you must just take it on your own head for prophesying horrors. You remember how you always said we were but an encampment of Bedouins, and that you would awake some morning to find us fled for ever. Nothing unsettled me more than these ill-judged remarks. I was doing my best to be a sedentary semi-respectable man in a suburban villa; and you were always shaking your head at me and assuring me (what I knew to be partly true) that it was all a farce. Even here, when I have sunk practically all that I possess, and have good health and my fill of congenial fighting, and could not possibly get away if I wanted

ever so—even here and now the recollection of these infidel prophecies rings in my ears like an invitation to the sea. *Tu l'as voulu!*

I know you want some of our news, and it is all so far away that I know not when to begin. We have a big house and we are building another—pray God that we can pay for it. I am just reminded that we have no less than eight several places of habitation in this place, which was a piece of uncleared forest some three years ago. I think there are on my pay rolls at the present moment thirteen human souls, not counting two washer-women who come and go. In addition to this I am at daggers drawn with the Government, have had my correspondence stopped and opened by the Chief Justice—it was correspondence with the so-called Rebel King,—and have had boys examined and threatened with deportation to betray the secrets of my relations with the same person. In addition to this I might direct attention to those trifling exercises of the fancy, my literary works, and I hope you won't think that I am likely to suffer from ennui. Nor is Fanny any less active. Ill or well, rain or shine, a little blue indefatigable figure is to be observed howking about certain patches of garden. She comes in heated and bemired up to the eyebrows, late for every meal. She has reached a sort of tragic placidity. Whenever she plants anything new the boys weed it up. Whenever she tries to keep anything for seed the house boys throw it away. And she has reached that pitch of a kind of noble dejection that she would almost say she did not mind. Anyway, her cabbages have succeeded. Talolo (our native cook, and a very good one too) likened them the other day to the head of a German; and even this hyperbolical image was grudging. I remember all the trouble you had with servants at the Roost. The most of them were nothing to the trances that we have to go through here at times, when I have to hold a bed of justice, and take evidence which is never twice the same, and decide, practically blindfold, and after I

have decided have the accuser take back the accusation in block and beg for mercy for the culprit. Conceive the annoyance of all this when you are very fond of both.—Your affectionate friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To E. L. BURLINGAME

Vailima Plantation, Samoan Islands,
Oct. 10th, 1892

MY DEAR BURLINGAME,—It is now, as you see, the 10th of October, and there has not reached the Island of Upolu one single copy, or rag of a copy, of the Samoa book. I lie; there has come one, and that in the pocket of a missionary man who is at daggers drawn with me, who lends it to all my enemies, conceals it from all my friends, and is bringing a lawsuit against me on the strength of expressions in the same which I have forgotten, and now cannot see. This is pretty tragic, I think you will allow; and I was inclined to fancy it was the fault of the Post Office. But I hear from my sister-in-law Mrs. Sanchez that she is in the same case, and has received no *Footnote.* I have also to consider that I had no letter from you last mail, although you ought to have received by that time "My Grandfather and Scott," and "Me and my Grandfather." Taking one consideration with another, therefore, I prefer to conceive that No. 743 Broadway has fallen upon gentle and continuous slumber, and is become an enchanted palace among publishing houses. If it be not so, if the *Footnotes* were really sent, I hope you will fall upon the Post Office with all the vigour you possess. How does *The Wrecker* go in the States? It seems to be doing exceptionally well in England.—Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Sidney Colvin

This letter contains the first announcement of the scheme of *Weir of Hermiston.*

Vailima, October 28th, 1892

My dear Colvin,—This is very late to begin the monthly budget, but I have a good excuse this time, for I have had a very annoying fever with symptoms of sore arm, and in the midst of it a very annoying piece of business which suffered no delay or idleness. . . . The consequence of all this was that my fever got very much worse and your letter has not been hitherto written. But, my dear fellow, do compare these little larky fevers with the fine, healthy, prostrating colds of the dear old dead days at home. Here was I, in the middle of a pretty bad one, and I was able to put it in my pocket, and go down day after day, and attend to and put my strength into this beastly business. Do you see me doing that with a catarrh? And if I had done so, what would have been the result?

Last night, about four o'clock, Belle and I set off to Apia, whither my mother had preceded us. She was at the Mission; we went to Haggard's. There we had to wait the most unconscionable time for dinner. I do not wish to speak lightly of the Amanuensis, who is unavoidably present, but I may at least say for myself that I was as cross as two sticks. Dinner came at last, we had the tinned soup which is usually the *piece de résistance* in the halls of Haggard, and we pitched into it. Followed an excellent salad of tomatoes and cray-fish, a good Indian curry, a tender joint of beef, a dish of pigeons, a pudding, cheese and coffee. I was so over-eaten after this "hunger and burst" that I could scarcely move; and it was my sad fate that night in the character of the local author to eloquute before the public—"Mr. Stevenson will read a selection from his own works"—a degrading picture. I had determined to read them the account of the

hurricane; I do not know if I told you that my book has never turned up here, or rather only one copy has, and that in the unfriendly hands of ——. It has therefore only been seen by enemies; and this combination of mystery and evil report has been greatly envenomed by some ill-judged newspaper articles from the States. Altogether this specimen was listened to with a good deal of uncomfortable expectation on the part of the Germans, and when it was over was applauded with unmistakable relief. The public hall where these revels came off seems to be unlucky for me; I never go there but to some stone-breaking job. Last time it was the public meeting of which I must have written you; this time it was this uneasy but not on the whole unsuccessful experiment. Belle, my mother, and I rode home about midnight in a fine display of lightning and witch-fires. My mother is absent, so that I may dare to say that she struck me as voluble. The Amanuensis did not strike me the same way; she was probably thinking, but it was really rather a weird business, and I saw what I have never seen before, the witch-fires gathered into little bright blue points almost as bright as a night-light.

Saturday.—This is the day that should bring your letter; it is grey and cloudy and windless; thunder rolls in the mountain; it is a quarter past six, and I am alone, sir, in this workman's house, Belle and Lloyd having been down all yesterday to meet the steamer; they were scarce gone with most of the horses and all the saddles, than there began a perfect picnic of the sick and maim; Iopu with a bad foot, Faauma with a bad shoulder, Fanny with yellow spots. It was at first proposed to carry all these to the doctor, particularly Faauma, whose shoulder bore an appearance of erysipelas, that sent the amateur below. No horses, no saddle. Now I had my horse and I could borrow Lafaele's saddle; and if I went alone I could do a job that had long been waiting; and that was to interview the doctor on another matter. Off I set in a

hazy moonlight night; windless, like to-day; the thunder rolling in the mountain, as to-day; in the still groves, these little mushroom lamps glowing blue and steady, singly or in pairs. Well, I had my interview, said everything as I had meant, and with just the result I hoped for. The doctor and I drank beer together and discussed German literature until nine, and we parted the best of friends. I got home to a silent house of sleepers, only Fanny awaiting me; we talked a while, in whispers, on the interview; then, I got a lantern and went across to the workman's house, now empty and silent, myself sole occupant. So to bed, prodigious tired but mighty content with my night's work, and to-day, with a headache and a chill, have written you this page, while my new novel waits. Of this I will tell you nothing, except the various names under consideration. First, it ought to be called—but of course that is impossible—

*Braxfield.**

Then it *is* to be called either

Weir of Hermiston,
The Lord-Justice Clerk,
The Two Kirsties of the Cauldstaneslap,
or
The Four Black Brothers.

Characters:

Adam Weir, Lord-Justice Clerk, called Lord Hermiston.
Archie, his son.
Aunt Kirstie Elliott, his housekeeper at Hermiston.
Elliott of the Cauldstaneslap, her brother.
Kirstie Elliott, his daughter.

* Robert MacQueen, Lord Braxfield, the "Hanging Judge" (1722-1799). This historical personage furnished the conception of the chief character, but by no means the details or incidents of the story, which is indeed dated some years after his death.

Jim, . . }
Gib, . . }
Hob . . }his sons.
and }
Dandie, }
Patrick Innes, a young advocate.
The Lord-Justice General.

Scene, about Hermiston, in the Lammermuirs and in Edinburgh. Temp. 1812. So you see you are to have another holiday from copra! The rain begins softly on the iron roof, and I will do the reverse and—dry up.

Sunday.—Yours with the diplomatic private opinion received. It is just what I should have supposed. *Ça m'est bien égal.*—The name is to be

The Lord-Justice Clerk.

None others are genuine. Unless it be

Lord-Justice Clerk Hermiston.

Nov. 2nd.—On Saturday we expected Captain Morse of the *Alameda* to come up to lunch, and on Friday with genuine South Sea hospitality had a pig killed. On the Saturday morning no pig. Some of the boys seemed to give a doubtful account of themselves; our next neighbour below in the wood is a bad fellow and very intimate with some of our boys, for whom his confounded house is like a fly-paper for flies. To add to all this, there was on the Saturday a great public presentation of food to the king and parliament men, an occasion on which it is almost dignified for a Samoan to steal anything, and entirely dignified for him to steal a pig.

(The Amanuensis went to the *talolo*, as it is called, and saw something so very pleasing she begs to interrupt the letter to tell it. The different villagers

came in in bands—led by the maid of the village, followed by the young warriors. It was a very fine sight, for some three thousand people are said to have assembled. The men wore nothing but magnificent headdresses and a bunch of leaves, and were oiled and glistening in the sunlight. One band had no maid but was led by a tiny child of about five—a serious little creature clad in a ribbon of grass and a fine-head-dress, who skipped with elaborate leaps in front of the warriors, like a little kid leading a band of lions.

A.M.)

The A.M. being done, I go on again. All this made it very possible that even if none of our boys had stolen the pig, some of them might know the thief. Besides, the theft, as it was a theft of meat prepared for a guest, had something of the nature of an insult and "my face," in native phrase, "was ashamed." Accordingly, we determined to hold a bed of justice. It was done last night after dinner. I sat at the head of the table, Graham on my right hand, Henry Simelé at my left, Lloyd behind him. The house company sat on the floor around the walls—twelve all told. I am described as looking as like Braxfield as I could manage with my appearance; Graham, who is of a severe countenance, looked like Rhadamanthus; Lloyd was hideous to the view; and Simelé had all the fine solemnity of a Samoan chief. The proceedings opened by my delivering a Samoan prayer, which may be translated thus—"Our God, look down upon us and shine into our hearts. Help us to be far from falsehood so that each one of us may stand before Thy Face in his integrity."—Then, beginning with Simelé, every one came up to the table, laid his hand on the Bible, and repeated clause by clause after me the following oath—I fear it may sound even comic in English, but it is a very pretty piece of Samoan, and struck direct at the most lively superstitions of the race. "This is the Holy Bible here that I am touching. Be-

hold me, O God! If I know who it was that took away the pig, or the place to which it was taken, or have heard anything relating to it, and shall not declare the same—be made an end of by God this life of mine!" They all took it with so much seriousness and firmness that (as Graham said) if they were not innocent they would make invaluable witnesses. I was so far impressed by their bearing that I went no further, and the funny and yet strangely solemn scene came to an end.

Sunday, Nov. 6th.—Here is a long story to go back upon, and I wonder if I have either time or patience for the task?

Wednesday I had a great idea of matchmaking, and proposed to Henry that Faalé would make a good wife for him. I wish I had put this down when it was fresher in my mind, it was so interesting an interview. My gentleman would not tell if I were on or not. "I do not know yet; I will tell you next week. May I tell the sister of my father? No, better not, tell her when it is done."—"But will not your family be angry if you marry without asking them?" "My village? What does my village want? Mats!" I said I thought the girl would grow up to have a great deal of sense, and my gentleman flew out upon me; she had sense now, he said.

Thursday, we were startled by the note of guns, and presently after heard it was an English war-ship. Graham and I set off at once, and as soon as we met any townsfolk they began crying to me that I was to be arrested. It was the *Vossische Zeitung* article which had been quoted in a paper. Went on board and saw Captain Bourke; he did not even know—not even guess—why he was here; having been sent off by cablegram from Auckland. It is hoped the same ship that takes this off Europewards may bring his orders and our news. But which is it to be? Heads or tails? If it is to be German, I hope they will deport me; I should prefer it so; I do not think that I could bear

a German officialdom, and should probably have to leave *sponte mea,* which is only less picturesque and more expensive.

8*th.*—Mail day. All well, not yet put in prison, whatever may be in store for me. No time even to sign this lame letter.

To J. M. Barrie

Vailima Plantation, Samoan Islands,
November 1st, 1892

Dear Mr. Barrie,—I can scarce thank you sufficiently for your extremely amusing letter. No, *The Auld Licht Idyls* never reached me—I wish it had, and I wonder extremely whether it would not be good for me to have a pennyworth of the Auld Licht pulpit. It is a singular thing that I should live here in the South Seas under conditions so new and so striking, and yet my imagination so continually inhabit that cold old huddle of grey hills from which we come. I have just finished *David Balfour;* I have another book on the stocks, *The Young Chevalier,* which is to be part in France and part in Scotland, and to deal with Prince Charlie about the year 1749; and now what have I done but begun a third which is to be all moorland together, and is to have for a centre-piece a figure that I think you will appreciate—that of the immortal Braxfield—Braxfield himself is my *grand premier,* or, since you are so much involved in the British drama, let me say my heavy lead. . . .

Your descriptions of your dealings with Lord Rintoul are frightfully unconscientious. You should never write about anybody until you persuade yourself at least for the moment that you love him, above all anybody on whom your plot revolves. It will always make a hole in the book; and, if he has anything to do with the mechanism, prove a stick in your machinery. But you know all this better than I do, and

it is one of your most promising traits that you do not take your powers too seriously. *The Little Minister* ought to have ended badly; we all know it did; and we are infinitely grateful to you for the grace and good feeling with which you lied about it. If you had told the truth, I for one could never have forgiven you. As you had conceived and written the earlier parts, the truth about the end, though indisputably true to fact, would have been a lie, or what is worse, a discord in art. If you are going to make a book end badly, it must end badly from the beginning. Now your book began to end well. You let yourself fall in love with, and fondle, and smile at your puppets. Once you had done that, your honour was committed—at the cost of truth to life, you were bound to save them. It is the blot on *Richard Feverel*, for instance, that it begins to end well; and then tricks you and ends ill. But in that case there is worse behind, for the ill-ending does not inherently issue from the plot—the story *had*, in fact, *ended well* after the great last interview between Richard and Lucy—and the blind, illogical bullet which smashes all has no more to do between the boards than a fly has to do with the room into whose open window it comes buzzing. It *might* have so happened; it needed not; and unless needs must, we have no right to pain our readers. I have had a heavy case of conscience of the same kind about my Braxfield story. Braxfield —only his name is Hermiston—has a son who is condemned to death; plainly, there is a fine tempting fitness about this; and I meant he was to hang. But now on considering my minor characters, I saw there were five people who would—in a sense who must—break prison and attempt his rescue. They were capable, hardy folks, too, who might very well succeed. Why should they not then? Why should not young Hermiston escape clear out of the country? and be happy, if he could, with his—— But soft! I will not betray my secret or my heroine. Suffice it to breathe in your

ear that she was what Hardy calls (and others in their plain way don't) a Pure Woman.* Much virtue in a capital letter, such as yours was.

Write to me again in my infinite distance. Tell me about your new book. No harm in telling *me;* I am too far off to be indiscreet; there are too few near me who would care to hear. I am rushes by the river-side, and the stream is in Babylon; breathe your secrets to me fearlessly; and if the Trade Wind caught and carried them away, there are none to catch them nearer than Australia, unless it were the Tropic Birds. In the unavoidable absence of my amanuensis, who is buying eels for dinner, I have thus concluded my dispatch, like St. Paul, with my own hand.

And in the inimitable words of Lord Kames, Faur ye weel, ye bitch.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To E. L. BURLINGAME

Vailima Plantation, Nov. 2nd, 1892

MY DEAR BURLINGAME,—In the first place, I have to acknowledge receipt of your munificent cheque for three hundred and fifty dollars. Glad you liked the Scott voyage; rather more than I did upon the whole. As the proofs have not turned up at all, there can be no question of returning them, and I am therefore very much pleased to think you have arranged not to wait. The volumes of Adams arrived along with yours of October 6th. One of the dictionaries has also blundered home, apparently from the Colonies; the other is still to seek. I note and sympathise with your bewilderment as to *Falesá.* My own direct correspondence with Mr. Baxter is now about three months in abeyance. Altogether you see how well it would be if you could do anything to wake up the Post Office. Not a

* The allusion is to *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* a book R. L. S. did not like.

single copy of the *Footnote* has yet reached Samoa, but I hear of one having come to its address in Hawaii. Glad to hear good news of Stoddard.—Yours sincerely,

R. L. STEVENSON.

P.S.—Since the above was written an aftermath of post matter came in, among which were the proofs of *My Grandfather*. I shall correct and return them, but as I have lost all confidence in the Post Office, I shall mention here: first galley, 4th line from the bottom, for "AS" read "OR."

Should you ever again have to use my work without waiting for proofs, bear in mind this golden principle. From a congenital defect, I must suppose, I am unable to write the word OR—wherever I write it the printer unerringly puts AS—and those who read for me had better, wherever it is possible, substitute *or* for *as*. This the more so since many writers have a habit of using *as* which is death to my temper and confusion to my face.

R. L. S.

To Austin Strong

Vailima, November 2, 1892

MY DEAR AUSTIN,—First and foremost I think you will be sorry to hear that our poor friend Arick has gone back to the German firm. He had not been working very well, and we had talked of sending him off before; but remembering how thin he was when he came here, and seeing what fat little legs and what a comfortable little stomach he had laid on in the meanwhile, we found we had not the heart. The other day, however, he set up chat to Henry, the Samoan overseer, asking him who he was and where he came from, and refusing to obey his orders. I was in bed in the workmen's house, having a fever. Uncle Lloyd came over to me, told me of it, and I had Arick sent up. I told him I would give him another chance. He was

taken out and asked to apologise to Henry, but he would do no such thing. He preferred to go back to the German firm. So we hired a couple of Samoans who were up here on a visit to the boys, and packed him off in their charge to the firm, where he arrived safely, and a receipt was given for him like a parcel.*

Sunday last the *Alameda* returned. Your mother was off bright and early with Pelema, for it is a very curious thing, but is certainly the case, that she was very impatient to get news of a young person by the name of Austin. Mr. Gurr lent a horse for the Captain—it was a pretty big horse, but our handsome Captain, as you know, is a very big Captain indeed. Now, do you remember Misifolo—a tall, thin Hovea boy that came shortly before you left? He had been riding up this same horse of Gurr's just the day before, and the horse threw him off at Motootua corner, and cut his hip. So Misifolo called out to the Captain as he rode by that that was a very bad horse, that it ran away and threw people off, and that he had best be careful; and the funny thing is, that the Captain did not like it at all. The foal might as well have tried to run away with Vailima as that horse with Captain Morse, which is poetry, as you see, into the bargain; but the Captain was not at all in that way of thinking, and was never really happy until he had got his foot on the ground again. It was just then that the horse began to be happy too, so they parted in one mind. But the horse is still wondering what kind of piece of artillery he had

* [NOTE BY LLOYD OSBOURNE.] When Arick left us and went back to the German company, he had grown so fat and strong and intelligent that they deemed he was made for better things than cotton-picking or plantation work, and handed him over to their surveyor, who needed a man to help him. I used often to meet him after this, tripping at his master's heels with the theodolite, or scampering about with tapes and chains like a kitten with a spool of thread. He did not look then as though he were destined to die of a broken heart, though that was his end not so many months afterwards. The plantation manager told me that Arick and a New Ireland boy went crazy with homesickness, and died in the hospital together.

brought up to Vailima last Sunday morning. So far it was all right. The Captain was got safe off the wicked horse, but how was he to get back again to Apia and the *Alameda?*

Harry thought—there was Donald, the big pack-horse! The last time Donald was ridden he had upon him a hair-pin and a pea—by which I mean (once again to drop into poetry) you and me. Now he was to have a rider more suited to his size. He was brought up to the door—he looked a mountain. A step-ladder was put alongside of him. The Captain approached the step-ladder, and he looked an Alp. I wasn't as much afraid for the horse as I was for the step-ladder, but it bore the strain, and with a kind of sickening smash that you might have heard at Monterey, the Captain descended to the saddle. Now don't think that I am exaggerating, but at the moment when that enormous Captain settled down upon Donald, the horse's hind legs gave visibly under the strain. What the couple looked like, one on top of t'other, no words can tell you, and your mother must here draw a picture.—Your respected Uncle,

O Tusitala.

To Austin Strong

Vailima, November 15, 1892.

My dear Austin,—The new house is begun. It stands out nearly half-way over towards Pineapple Cottage—the lower floor is laid and the uprights of the wall are set up; so that the big lower room wants nothing but a roof over its head. When it rains (as it does mostly all the time) you never saw anything look so sorry for itself as that room left outside. Beyond the house there is a work-shed roofed with sheets of iron, and in front, over about half the lawn, the lumber for the house lies piled. It is about the bringing up of this lumber that I want to tell you.

For about a fortnight there were at work upon the

job two German overseers, about a hundred Black Boys, and from twelve to twenty-four draught-oxen. It rained about half the time, and the road was like lather for shaving. The Black Boys seemed to have had a new rig-out. They had almost all shirts of scarlet flannel, and lava lavas, the Samoan kilt, either of scarlet or light blue. As the day got warm they took off the shirts; and it was a very curious thing, as you went down to Apia on a bright day, to come upon one tree after another in the empty forest with these shirts stuck among the branches like vermilion birds.

I observed that many of the boys had a very queer substitute for a pocket. This was nothing more than a string which some of them tied about their upper arms and some about their necks, and in which they stuck their clay pipes; and as I don't suppose they had anything else to carry, it did very well. Some had feathers in their hair, and some long stalks of grass through the holes in their noses. I suppose this was intended to make them look pretty, poor dears; but you know what a Black Boy looks like, and these Black Boys, for all their blue, and their scarlet, and their grass, looked just as shabby and small, and sad, and sorry for themselves, and like sick monkeys as any of the rest.

As you went down the road you came upon them first working in squads of two. Each squad shouldered a couple of planks and carried them up about two hundred feet, gave them to two others, and walked back empty-handed to the places they had started from. It wasn't very hard work, and they didn't go about it at all lively; but, of course, when it rained, and the mud was deep, the poor fellows were unhappy enough. This was in the upper part about Trood's. Below, all the way down to Tanugamanono, you met the bullock-carts coming and going, each with ten or twenty men to attend upon it, and often enough with one of the overseers near. Quite a far way off through the forest you could hear the noise of one of these carts approaching. The road was like a bog, and though a good deal

wider than it was when you knew it, so narrow that the bullocks reached quite across it with the span of their big horns. To pass by, it was necessary to get into the Bush on one side or the other. The bullocks seemed to take no interest in their business; they looked angry and stupid, and sullen beyond belief; and when it came to a heavy bit of road, as often as not they would stop.

As long as they were going the Black Boys walked in the margin of the Bush on each side, pushing the cart-wheels with hands and shoulders and raising the most extraordinary outcry. It was strangely like some very big kind of bird. Perhaps the great flying creatures that lived upon the earth long before man came, if we could have come near one of their meeting-places, would have given us just such a concert.

When one of the bullamacows * stopped altogether the fun was highest. The bullamacow stood on the road, head fixed fast in the yoke, chewing a little, breathing very hard, and showing in his red eye that if he could get rid of the yoke he would show them what a circus was. All the Black Boys tailed on to the wheels and the back of the cart stood there getting their spirits up, and then of a sudden set to shooing and singing out. It was these outbursts of shrill cries that it was so curious to hear in the distance. One such stuck cart I came up to and asked what was the worry. "Old fool bullamacow stop same place," was the reply. I never saw any of the overseers near any of the stuck carts; you were a very much better overseer than either of these.

* [Note by Lloyd Osbourne.] "Bullamacow" is a word that always amuses the visitor to Samoa. When the first pair of cattle was brought to the islands, and the natives asked the missionaries what they must call these strange creatures, they were told that the English name was "a bull and a cow." But the Samoans thought that "a bull and a cow" was the name of each of the animals, and they soon corrupted the English words into "bullamacow," which has remained the name for beef or cattle ever since.

While this was going on, I had to go down to Apia five or six different times, and each time there were a hundred Black Boys to say "Good-morning" to. This was rather a tedious business; and, as very few of them answered at all, and those who did, only with a grunt like a pig's, it was several times in my mind to give up this piece of politeness. The last time I went down, I was almost decided; but when I came to the first pair of Black Boys, and saw them looking so comic and so melancholy, I began the business over again. This time I thought more of them seemed to answer, and when I got down to the tail-end where the carts were running, I received a very pleasant surprise, for one of the boys, who was pushing at the back of a cart, lifted up his head, and called out to me in wonderfully good English, "You good man—always say 'Good-morning.'" It was sad to think that these poor creatures should think so much of so small a piece of civility, and strange that (thinking so) they should be so dull as not to return it.

UNCLE LOUIS.

To Lieutenant Eeles

The following is addressed to one of Stevenson's best friends among the officers of H.M.S. the *Curaçoa,* which had been for some time on the South Pacific station.

Vailima Plantation, Upolu, Samoan Islands, November 15th, 1892

DEAR EELES,—In the first place, excuse me writing to you by another hand, as that is the way in which alone all my correspondence gets effected. Before I took to this method, or rather before I found a victim, it simply didn't get effected.

Thank you again and again, first for your kind thought of writing to me, and second for your extremely amusing and interesting letter. You can have no guess how immediately interesting it was to our

family. First of all, the poor soul at Nukufetau is an old friend of ours, and we have actually treated him ourselves on a former visit to the island. I don't know if Hoskyn would approve of our treatment; it consisted, I believe, mostly in a present of stout and a recommendation to put nails in his water-tank. We also (as you seem to have done) recommended him to leave the island; and I remember very well how wise and kind we thought his answer. He had half-caste children (he said) who would suffer and perhaps be despised if he carried them elsewhere; if he left them there alone, they would almost certainly miscarry; and the best thing was that he should stay and die with them. But the cream of the fun was your meeting with Burn. We not only know him, but (as the French say) we don't know anybody else; he is our intimate and adored original; and—prepare your mind—he was, is, and ever will be, TOMMY HADDON! * As I don't believe you to be inspired, I suspect you to have suspected this. At least it was a mighty happy suspicion. You are quite right: Tommy is really " a good chap," though about as comic as they make them.

I was extremely interested in your Fiji legend, and perhaps even more so in your capital account of the *Curaçoa's* misadventure. Alas! we have nothing so thrilling to relate. All hangs and fools on in this isle of misgovernment, without change, though not without novelty, but wholly without hope, unless perhaps you should consider it hopeful that I am still more immediately threatened with arrest. The confounded thing is, that if it comes off, I shall be sent away in the *Ringarooma* instead of the *Curaçoa*. The former ship burst upon us by the run—she had been sent off by despatch and without orders—and to make me a little more easy in my mind she brought newspapers clamouring for my incarceration. Since then I have had a conversation with the German Consul. He said he had read a review of my Samoa book, and if the review

* A character in *The Wrecker*.

were fair, must regard it as an insult, and one that would have to be resented. At the same time, I learn that letters addressed to the German squadron lie for them here in the Post Office. Reports are current of other English ships being on the way—I hope to goodness yours will be among the number. And I gather from one thing and another, that there must be a holy row going on between the powers at home, and that the issue (like all else connected with Samoa) is on the knees of the gods. One thing, however, is pretty sure —if that issue prove to be a German Protectorate, I shall have to tramp. Can you give us any advice as to a fresh field of energy? We have been searching the atlas, and it seems difficult to fill the bill. How would Rarotonga do? I forget if you have been there. The best of it is that my new house is going up like winking, and I am dictating this letter to the accompaniment of saws and hammers. A hundred black boys and about a score draught oxen perished, or at least barely escaped with their lives, from the mud holes on our road, bringing up the materials. It will be a fine legacy to H.I.G.M.'s Protectorate, and doubtless the Governor will take it for his country house.* The *Ringarooma* people, by the way, seem very nice. I liked Stansfield particularly.

Our middy † has gone up to San Francisco in pursuit of the phantom Education. We have good word of him, and I hope he will not be in disgrace again, as he was when the hope of the British Navy—need I say that I refer to Admiral Burney?—honoured us last. The next time you come, as the new house will be finished, we shall be able to offer you a bed. Nares and Meiklejohn may like to hear that our new room is to be big enough to dance in. It will be a very pleasant day for me to see the *Curaçoa* in port again and at least a proper contingent of her officers "skipping in my 'all."

We have just had a feast on my birthday at which

* Exactly what later on actually happened.

† Austin Strong.

we had three of the *Ringaroomas,* and I wish they had been three *Curaçoas*—say yourself, Hoskyn, and Burney the ever Great. (Consider this an invitation.) Our boys had got the thing up regardless. There were two huge sows—O, brutes of animals that would have broken down a hansom cab—four smaller pigs, two barrels of beef, and a horror of vegetables and fowls. We sat down between forty and fifty in a big new native house behind the kitchen that you have never seen, and ate and public spoke till all was blue. Then we had about half an hour's holiday with some beer and sherry and brandy and soda to re-strengthen the European heart, and then out to the old native house to see a siva. Finally, all the guests were packed off in a trackless black night and down a road that was rather fitted for the *Curaçoa* than any human pedestrian, though to be sure I do not know the draught of the *Curaçoa.* My ladies one and all desire to be particularly remembered to our friends on board, and all look forward, as I do myself, in the hope of your return.—Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

And let me hear from you again!

To SIDNEY COLVIN

[*November* 30, 1892]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—Another grimy little odd and end of paper, for which you shall be this month repaid in kind, and serve you jolly well right. . . . This is a strange life I live, always on the brink of deportation, men's lives in the scale—and, well, you know my character: if I were to pretend to you that I was not amused, you would justly scorn me. The new house is roofed; it will be a braw house, and what is better, I have my yearly bill in, and I find I can pay for it. For all which mercies, etc. I must have made close on £4,000 this

year all told; but, what is not so pleasant, I seem to have come near to spending them. I have been in great alarm, with this new house on the cards, all summer, and came very near to taking in sail, but I live here so entirely on credit, that I determined to hang on.

Dec. 1st.—I was saying yesterday that my life was strange and did not think how well I spoke. Yesterday evening I was briefed to defend a political prisoner before the Deputy Commissioner. What do you think of that for a vicissitude?

Dec. 3rd.—Now for a confession. When I heard you and Cassells had decided to print *The Bottle Imp* along with *Falesá,* I was too much disappointed to answer. *The Bottle Imp* was the *pièce de résistance* for my volume, *Island Nights' Entertainments.* However, that volume might have never got done; and I send you two others in case they should be in time.

First have *The Beach of Falesá.*

Then a fresh false title: ISLAND NIGHTS' ENTERTAINMENTS; and then

The Bottle Imp: a cue from an old melodrama.

The Isle of Voices.

The Waif-Woman: a cue from a *saga.*

Of course these two others are not up to the mark of *The Bottle Imp:* but they each have a certain merit, and they fit in style. By saying "a cue from an old melodrama" after the *B. I.,* you can get rid of my note. If this is in time, it will be splendid, and will make quite a volume.

Should you and Cassells prefer, you can call the whole volume *I. N. E.*—though *The Beach of Falesá* is the child of a quite different inspiration. They all have a queer realism, even the most extravagant, even the *Isle of Voices;* the manners are exact.

Should they come too late, have them type-written, and return to me here the type-written copies.

Sunday, Dec. 4th.—3rd start,—But now more humbly and with the aid of an Amanuensis. First one word about page 2. My wife protests against *The Waif-*

Woman and I am instructed to report the same to you.* . . .

Dec. 5th.—A horrid alarm rises that our October mail was burned crossing the Plains. If so, you lost a beautiful long letter—I am sure it was beautiful though I remember nothing about it—and I must say I think it serves you properly well. That I should continue writing to you at such length is simply a vicious habit for which I blush. At the same time, please communicate at once with Charles Baxter whether you have or have not received a letter posted here Oct. 12th, as he is going to cable me the fate of my mail.

Now to conclude my news. The German firm have taken my book like angels, and the result is that Lloyd and I were down there at dinner on Saturday, where we partook of fifteen several dishes and eight distinct forms of intoxicating drink. To the credit of Germany, I must say there was not a shadow of a headache the next morning. I seem to have done as well as my neighbours, for I hear one of the clerks expressed the next morning a gratified surprise that Mr. Stevenson stood his drink so well. It is a strange thing that any race can still find joy in such athletic exercises. I may remark in passing that the mail is due and you have had far more than you deserve.

R. L. S.

To Charles Baxter

The following extract gives a hint of Stevenson's intended management of one of the most difficult points in the plot of *Weir of Hermiston*.

1*st Dec.*, '92

. . . I HAVE a novel on the stocks to be called *The Justice-Clerk*. It is pretty Scotch, the Grand Premier is taken from Braxfield—(Oh, by the by, send me Cockburn's *Memorials*)—and some of the story is—well—queer. The heroine is seduced by one man, and finally

* This tale was withheld from the volume accordingly.

disappears with the other man who shot him. . . . Mind you, I expect *The Justice-Clerk* to be my masterpiece. My Braxfield is already a thing of beauty and a joy for ever, and so far as he has gone, *far* my best character.

[*Later*]—Second thought. I wish Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials quam primum.* Also, an absolutely correct text of the Scots judiciary oath.

Also, in case Pitcairn does not come down late enough, I wish as full a report as possible of a Scotch murder trial between 1790-1820. Understand, *the fullest possible.*

Is there any book which would guide me as to the following facts?

The Justice-Clerk tries some people capitally on circuit. Certain evidence cropping up, the charge is transferred to the J.-C.'s own son. Of course, in the next trial the J.-C. is excluded, and the case is called before the Lord-Justice General.

Where would this trial have to be? I fear in Edinburgh, which would not suit my view. Could it be again at the circuit town?

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TO MRS. FLEEMING JENKIN

December 5th, 1892

MY DEAR MRS. JENKIN,— . . . So much said, I come with guilty speed to what more immediately concerns myself. Spare us a month or two for old sake's sake, and make my wife and me happy and proud. We are only fourteen days from San Francisco, just about a month from Liverpool; we have our new house almost finished. The thing *can* be done; I believe we can make you almost comfortable. It is the loveliest climate in the world, our political troubles seem near an end. It can be done, *it must!* Do, please, make a virtuous effort, come and take a glimpse of a new world I am

sure you do not dream of, and some old friends who do often dream of your arrival.

Alas, I was just beginning to get eloquent, and there goes the lunch bell, and after lunch I must make up the mail.

Do come. You must not come in February or March —bad months. From April on it is delightful.—Your sincere friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TO HENRY JAMES

December 5th, 1892

MY DEAR JAMES,—How comes it so great a silence has fallen? The still small voice of self-approval whispers me it is not from me. I have looked up my register, and find I have neither written to you nor heard from you since June 22nd, on which day of grace that invaluable work began. This is not as it should be. How to get back? I remember acknowledging with rapture *The Lesson of the Master,* and I remember receiving *Marbot:* was that our last relation?

Hey, well! anyway, as you may have probably gathered from the papers, I have been in devilish hot water, and (what may be new to you) devilish hard at work. In twelve calendar months I finished *The Wrecker,* wrote all of *Falesá* but the first chapter, (well, much of) the *History of Samoa,* did something here and there to my Life of my Grandfather, and began And Finished *David Balfour.* What do you think of it for a year? Since then I may say I have done nothing beyond draft three chapters of another novel, *The Justice-Clerk,* which ought to be a snorter and a blower—at least if it don't make a spoon, it will spoil the horn of an Aurochs (if that's how it should be spelt).

On the hot water side it may entertain you to know that I have been actually sentenced to deportation by

my friends on Mulinuu, C. J. Cedercrantz and Baron Senfft von Pilsach. The awful doom, however, declined to fall, owing to Circumstances over Which. I only heard of it (so to speak) last night. I mean officially, but I had walked among rumours. The whole tale will be some day put into my hand, and I shall share it with humorous friends.

It is likely, however, by my judgment, that this epoch of gaiety in Samoa will soon cease; and the fierce white light of history will beat no longer on Yours Sincerely and his fellows here on the beach. We ask ourselves whether the reason will more rejoice over the end of a disgraceful business, or the unregenerate man more sorrow over the stoppage of the fun. For, say what you please, it has been a deeply interesting time. You don't know what news is, nor what politics, nor what the life of man, till you see it on so small a scale and with your own liberty on the board for stake. I would not have missed it for much. And anxious friends beg me to stay at home and study human nature in Brompton drawing-rooms! *Farceurs!* And anyway you know that such is not my talent. I could never be induced to take the faintest interest in Brompton *qua* Brompton or a drawing-room *qua* a drawing-room. I am an Epick Writer with a k to it, but without the necessary genius.

Hurry up with another book of stories. I am now reduced to two of my contemporaries, you and Barrie—O, and Kipling—you and Barrie and Kipling are now my Muses Three. And with Kipling, as you know, there are reservations to be made. And you and Barrie don't write enough. I should say I also read Anstey when he is serious, and can almost always get a happy day out of Marion Crawford—*ce n'est pas toujours la guerre,* but it's got life to it and guts, and it moves. Did you read the *Witch of Prague?* Nobody could read it twice, of course; and the first time even it was necessary to skip. *E pur si muove.* But Barrie is a beauty, *The Little Minister* and *The Window in*

Thrums, eh? Stuff in that young man; but he must see and not be too funny. Genius in him, but there's a journalist at his elbow—there's the risk. Look, what a page is the glove business in the *Window!* knocks a man flat; that's guts, if you please.

Why have I wasted the little time that is left with a sort of naked review article? I don't know, I'm sure. I suppose a mere ebullition of congested literary talk. I am beginning to think a visit from friends would be due. Wish you could come!

Let us have your news anyway, and forgive this silly stale effusion.—Yours ever,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To J. M. BARRIE

[*Vailima, December,* 1892]

DEAR J. M. BARRIE,—You will be sick of me soon; I cannot help it. I have been off my work for some time, and re-read the *Edinburgh Eleven,* and had a great mind to write a parody and give you all your sauce back again, and see how you would like it yourself. And then I read (for the first time—I know not how) *The Window in Thrums;* I don't say that it is better than the *Minister;* it's less a tale—and there is a beauty, a material beauty of the tale *ipse* which clever critics nowadays long and love to forget; it has more real flaws; but somehow it is—well, I read it last anyway, and it's by Barrie. And he's the man for my money. The glove is a great page; it is startlingly original, and as true as death and judgment. Tibbie Birse in the Burial is great, but I think it was a journalist that got in the word "official." The same character plainly had a word to say to Thomas Haggard. Thomas affects me as a lie—I beg your pardon; doubtless he was somebody you knew; that leads people so far astray. The actual is not the true.

I am proud to think you are a Scotchman—though

to be sure I know nothing of that country, being only an English tourist, quo' Gavin Ogilvy. I commend the hard case of Mr. Gavin Ogilvy to J. M. Barrie, whose work is to me a source of living pleasure and heartfelt national pride. There are two of us now that the Shirra might have patted on the head. And please do not think when I thus seem to bracket myself with you, that I am wholly blinded with vanity. Jess is beyond my frontier line; I could not touch her skirt; I have no such glamour of twilight on my pen. I am a capable artist; but it begins to look to me as if you were a man of genius. Take care of yourself for my sake. It's a devilish hard thing for a man who writes so many novels as I do, that I should get so few to read. And I can read yours, and I love them.

A pity for you that my amanuensis is not on stock to-day, and my own hand perceptibly worse than usual.—Yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

December 5th, 1892

P. S.—They tell me your health is not strong. Man, come out here and try the Prophet's chamber. There's only one bad point to us—we do rise early. The Amanuensis states that you are a lover of silence—and that ours is a noisy house—and she is a chatterbox—I am not answerable for these statements, though I do think there is a touch of garrulity about my premises. We have so little to talk about, you see. The house is three miles from town, in the midst of great silent forests. There is a burn close by, and when we are not talking you can hear the burn, and the birds, and the sea breaking on the coast three miles away and six hundred feet below us, and about three times a month a bell—I don't know where the bell is, nor who rings it; it may be the bell in Hans

Andersen's story for all I know. It is never hot here—68 in the shade is about our hottest—and it is never cold except just in the early mornings. Take it for all in all, I suppose this island climate to be by far the healthiest in the world—even the influenza entirely lost its sting. Only two patients died, and one was a man nearly eighty, and the other a child below four months. I won't tell you if it is beautiful, for I want you to come here and see for yourself. Everybody on the premises except my wife has some Scotch blood in their veins—I beg your pardon—except the natives—and then my wife is a Dutchwoman—and the natives are the next thing conceivable to Highlanders before the forty-five. We would have some grand cracks!

R. L. S.

Come, it will broaden your mind, and be the making of me.

To Baron Senfft von Pilsach

Vailima, Dec. 16th, 1892

Sir,—Your favour of the 5th current, which came only yesterday into my hands, requires a word of explanation. It was only proper that I should bring to your notice the contents of that book. Your name was accordingly sent, along with many others, to the publishers. In the ordinary course of their business, the slip "with the compliments of the author" would be put (by a shopboy) into every copy of the work thus ordered and forwarded. Such a slip has no meaning, it is purely formal and a matter of routine, nor had it occurred to my memory that this was the practice. It is my regret that I have not been able to be a more agreeable neighbour; but a wanton offence is far from my thoughts and I trust unknown in my practice.

I have the honour to be,—Sir, Your obedient servant,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

To Charles Baxter

This correspondent had lately been on a tour in Sweden.

[*Vailima*] *December 28th,* 1892

My dear Charles,—Your really decent letter to hand. And here I am answering it, to the merry note of the carpenter's hammer, in an upper room of the New House. This upper floor is almost done now, but the Grrrrrreat 'All below is still unlined; it is all to be varnished redwood. I paid a big figure but do not repent; the trouble has been so minimised, the work has been so workmanlike, and all the parties have been so obliging. What a pity when you met the Buried Majesty of Sweden—the sovereign of my Cedercrantz—you did not breathe in his ear a word of Samoa!

O Sovereign of my Cedercrantz,
Conceive how his plump carcase pants
To leave the spot he now is tree'd in,
And skip with all the dibbs to Sweden.

O Sovereign of my Cedercrantz,
The lowly plea I now advantz;
Remove this man of light and leadin'
From us to more congenial Sweden.

This kind of thing might be kept up a Lapland night. "Let us bury the great joke"—Shade of Tennyson, forgive!

I am glad to say, you can scarce receive the second bill for the house until next mail, which gives more room to turn round in. Yes, my rate of expenditure is hellish. It is funny, it crept up and up; and when we sat upon one vent another exploded. Lloyd and I grew grey over the monthly returns; but every damned month, there is a new extra. However, we always hope the next will prove less recalcitrant; in which faith we advance trembling.

The desiderated advertisement, I think I have told you, was mighty near supplied; that is, if deportation

would suit your view: the ship was actually sought to be hired. Yes, it would have been an advertisement, and rather a lark, and yet a blooming nuisance. For my part, I shall try to do without.

No one has thought fit to send me *Atalanta* *; and I have no proof at all of *D. Balfour*, which is far more serious. How about the *D. B.* map? As soon as there is a proof it were well I should see it to accord the text thereto—or t'other way about if needs must. Remember I had to go much on memory in writing that work. Did you observe the dedication? and how did you like it? If it don't suit you, I am to try my hand again.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

* The magazine in which *Catriona* first appeared in this country, under the title *David Balfour*.

XIII

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

THIRD YEAR AT VAILIMA

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1893

XIII

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Continued*

BY the new year of 1893 the fine addition to the house at Vailima was finished, and its pleasantness and comfort went far to console Stevenson for the cost. But the year was on the whole a less fortunate one for the inmates than the last. A proclamation concerning penalties for sedition in the Samoan Islands, which from its tenor could have been aimed at no one else but Stevenson, had been issued at the close of 1892 by the High Commissioner at Fiji, and with its modification and practical withdrawal, by order of the Foreign Office at home, the last threat of unpleasant consequences in connection with his political action disappeared. But a sharp second attack of influenza in January lowered his vitality, and from a trip which he took with his family for the sake of change to Sydney, in the month of February, they returned with health unimproved. In April the illness of Mrs. Stevenson caused her husband some weeks of acute distress and anxiety. In August he suffered the chagrin of witnessing the outbreak of the war which he had vainly striven to prevent between the two rival kings, and the defeat and banishment of Mataafa, whom he knew to be the one man of governing capacity among the native chiefs, and whom, in the interest alike of whites and natives, he had desired to see the Powers not crush, but conciliate. On the other hand he had the satisfaction of seeing the Chief Justice and President removed from their posts and superseded by new and better men. The task imposed by the three Powers upon these officials was in truth an impossible one; but their characters and en-

deavours earned respect, and with the American Chief Justice in particular, Mr. C. J. Ide, and with his family, the Vailima household lived on terms of cordial friendship. In September Stevenson took a health trip to Honolulu, which again turned out unsuccessful. For some weeks he was down with a renewed attack of fever and prostration, and his wife had to come from Samoa to nurse and fetch him home. Later in the autumn he mended again.

During no part of this year were Stevenson's working powers up to the mark. In the early summer he finished *The Ebb-Tide,* but on a plan much abridged from its original intention, and with an unusual degree of strain and effort. With *St. Ives* and his own family history he made fair progress, but both of these he regarded as in a manner holiday tasks, not calling for any very serious exercise of his powers. In connection with the latter he took an eager interest, as his correspondence will show, in the researches which friends and kinsmen undertook for him in Scotland. He fell into arrears in regard to one or two magazine stories for which he had contracted; and with none of his more ambitious schemes of romance, *Sophia Scarlet, The Young Chevalier, Heathercat,* and *Weir of Hermiston,* did he feel himself well able to cope. This falling-off of his power of production brought with it no small degree of inward strain and anxiety. He had not yet put by any provision for his wife and step-family (the income from the moderate fortune left by his father naturally going to his mother during her life). His earnings had since 1887 been considerable, at the rate of £4,000 a year or thereabouts; but his building expenses and large mode of life at Vailima, together with his habitual generosity towards the less fortunate of his friends and acquaintances in various parts of the world, made his expenditure about equal to his income. The thought began to haunt him, What if his power of earning were soon to cease? And occasional signs of inward de-

pression and life-weariness began to appear in his correspondence. But it was only in writing, and then but rarely, that he let such signs appear; to those about him he retained, according to all evidence, the old affectionate charm and inspiring gaiety undiminished, fulfilling without failure the words of his own prayer, "Give us to awake with smiles, give us to labour smiling; as the sun lightens the world, so let our loving-kindness make bright this house of our habitation."

To Sidney Colvin

[*Vailima*] *January*, 1893

My dear Colvin,—You are properly paid at last, and it is like you will have but a shadow of a letter. I have been pretty thoroughly out of kilter; first a fever that would neither come on nor go off, then acute dyspepsia, in the weakening grasp of which I get wandering between the waking state and one of nightmare. Why the devil does no one send me *Atalanta?* And why are there no proofs of *D. Balfour?* Sure I should have had the whole, at least the half, of them by now; and it would be all for the advantage of the Atalantans. I have written to Cassell & Co. (matter of *Falesá*) "you will please arrange with him" (meaning you). "What he may decide I shall abide." So consider your hand free, and act for me without fear or favour. I am greatly pleased with the illustrations. It is very strange to a South Seayer to see Hawaiian women dressed like Samoans, but I guess that's all one to you in Middlesex. It's about the same as if London city men were shown going to the Stock Exchange as *pifferari;* but no matter, none will sleep worse for it. I have accepted Cassell's proposal as an amendment to one of mine; that *D. B.* is to be brought out first under the title *Catriona* without pictures; and, when the hour strikes, *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* are to form vols. I. and II. of the heavily illustrated *Adventures of David Balfour* at 7s. 6d. each, sold separately.

——'s letter was vastly sly and dry and shy.* I am not afraid now. Two attempts have been made, both have failed, and I imagine these failures strengthen me. Above all this is true of the last, where my weak point was attempted. On every other, I am strong. Only force can dislodge me, for public opinion is wholly

* The correspondent whose letter I had sent on was a high official at the Foreign Office: the subject, Stevenson and Samoa.

on my side. All races and degrees are united in heartfelt opposition to the Men of Mulinuu. The news of the fighting was of no concern to mortal man; it was made much of because men love talk of battles, and because the Government pray God daily for some scandal not their own; but it was only a brisk episode in a clan fight which has grown apparently endemic in the west of Tutuila. At the best it was a twopenny affair, and never occupied my mind five minutes.

I am so weary of reports that are without foundation and threats that go without fulfilment, and so much occupied besides by the raging troubles of my own wame, that I have been very slack on politics, as I have been in literature. With incredible labour, I have rewritten the First Chapter of the *Justice-Clerk;* it took me about ten days, and requires another athletic dressing after all. And that is my story for the month. The rest is grunting and grutching.

Consideranda for *The Beach:*—

I. Whether to add one or both the tales I sent you?

II. Whether to call the whole volume "Island Nights' Entertainments"?

III. Whether, having waited so long, it would not be better to give me another mail, in case I could add another member to the volume and a little better justify the name?

If I possibly can draw up another story, I will. What annoyed me about the use of *The Bottle Imp* was that I had always meant it for the centre-piece of a volume of *Märchen* which I was slowly to elaborate. You always had an idea that I depreciated the *B. I.;* I can't think wherefore; I always particularly liked it—one of my best works, and ill to equal; and that was why I loved to keep it in portfolio till I had time to grow up to some other fruit of the same *venue.* However, that is disposed of now, and we must just do the best we can.

I am not aware that there is anything to add; the

weather is hellish, waterspouts, mists, chills, the foul fiend's own weather, following on a week of expurgated heaven; so it goes at this bewildering season. I write in the upper floor of my new house, of which I will send you some day a plan to measure. 'Tis an elegant structure, surely, and the proid of me oi. Was asked to pay for it just now, and genteelly refused, and then agreed, in view of general good-will, to pay a half of what is still due.

24*th January,* 1893.—This ought to have gone last mail and was forgotten. My best excuse is that I was engaged in starting an influenza, to which class of exploit our household has been since then entirely dedicated. We had eight cases, one of them very bad —and one—mine—complicated with my old friend Bluidy Jack.* Luckily neither Fanny, Lloyd, or Belle took the confounded thing, and they were able to run the household and nurse the sick to admiration.

Some of our boys behaved like real trumps. Perhaps the prettiest performance was that of our excellent Henry Simelé, or, as we sometimes call him, Davy Balfour. Henry, I maun premeese, is a chief; the humblest Samoan recoils from emptying slops as you would from cheating at cards; now the last nights of our bad time, when we had seven down together, it was enough to have made anybody laugh or cry to see Henry going the rounds with a slop-bucket and going inside the mosquito net of each of the sick, Protestant and Catholic alike, to pray with them.

I must tell you that in my sickness I had a huge alleviation and began a new story. This I am writing by dictation, and really think it is an art I can manage to acquire. The relief is beyond description; it is just like a school-treat to me and the Amanuensis bears up extraordinar'. The story is to be called *St. Ives;* I give you your choice whether or not it should bear the sub-title, "Experiences of a French prisoner in England." We were just getting on splendidly with

* Hemorrhage from the lungs.

it, when this cursed mail arrived and requires to be attended to. It looks to me very like as if *St. Ives* would be ready before any of the others, but you know me and how impossible it is I should predict. The Amanuensis has her head quite turned and believes herself to be the author of this novel (and *is* to some extent)—and as the creature (!) has not been wholly useless in the matter (I told you so! A.M.) I propose to foster her vanity by a little commemoration gift! The name of the hero is Anne de St. Yves—he Englishes his name to St. Ives during his escape. It is my idea to get a ring made which shall either represent *Anne* or A. S. Y. A., of course, would be Amethyst and S. Sapphire, which is my favourite stone anyway and was my father's before me. But what would the ex-Slade professor do about the letter Y? Or suppose he took the other version, how would he meet the case, the two N.'s? These things are beyond my knowledge, which it would perhaps be more descriptive to call ignorance. But I place the matter in the meanwhile under your consideration and beg to hear your views. I shall tell you on some other occasion and when the A.M. is out of hearing how *very* much I propose to invest in this testimonial; but I may as well inform you at once that I intend it to be cheap, sir, damned cheap! My idea of running amanuenses is by praise, not pudding, flattery and not coins! I shall send you when the time is ripe a ring to measure by.

To resume our sad tale. After the other seven were almost wholly recovered Henry lay down to influenza on his own account. He is but just better and it looks as though Fanny were about to bring up the rear. As for me, I am all right, though I *was* reduced to dictating *Anne* in the deaf-and-dumb alphabet, which I think you will admit is a *comble*.

Politics leave me extraordinarily cold. It seems that so much of my purpose has come off, and Cedercrantz and Pilsach are sacked. The rest of it has all gone

to water. The triple-headed ass at home, in his plenitude of ignorance, prefers to collect the taxes and scatter the Mataafas by force or the threat of force. It may succeed, and I suppose it will. It is none the less for that expensive, harsh, unpopular, and unsettling. I am young enough to have been annoyed, and altogether eject and renegate the whole idea of political affairs. Success in that field appears to be the organization of failure enlivened with defamation of character; and, much as I love pickles and hot water (in your true phrase) I shall take my pickles in future from Crosse and Blackwell and my hot water with a dose of good Glenlivat.

Do not bother at all about the wall papers. We have had the whole of our new house varnished, and it looks beautiful. I wish you could see the hall; poor room, it had to begin life as an infirmary during our recent visitation; but it is really a handsome comely place, and when we get the furniture, and the pictures, and what is so very much more decorative, the picture frames, will look sublime.

Jan. 30*th.*—I have written to Charles asking for Rowlandson's *Syntax* and *Dance of Death* out of our house, and begging for anything about fashions and manners (fashions particularly) for 1814. Can you help? Both the *Justice-Clerk* and *St. Ives* fall in that fated year. Indeed I got into *St. Ives* while going over the Annual Register for the other. There is a kind of fancy list of Chaps. of *St. Ives.* (It begins in Edin^{b}. Castle.) I. Story of a lion rampant (that was a toy he had made, and given to a girl visitor). II. Story of a pair of scissors. III. St. Ives receives a bundle of money. IV. St. Ives is shown a house. V. The escape. VI. The Cottage (Swanston Cottage). VII. The Henhouse. VIII. Three is company and four none. IX. The Drovers. X. The Great North Road. XI. Burchell Fenn. XII. The covered cart. XIII. The doctor. XIV. The Luddites. XV. Set a thief to catch a thief. XVI. M. le Comte de Kéroualle (his uncle, the rich *émigré*,

whom he finds murdered). XVII. The cousins. XVIII. Mr. Sergeant Garrow. XIX. A meeting at the Ship, Dover. XX. Diane. XXI. The Duke's Prejudices. XXII. The False Messenger. XXIII. The Gardener's ladder. XXIV. The officers. XXV. Trouble with the Duke. XXVI. Fouquet again. XXVII. The Aeronaut. XXVIII. The True-Blooded Yankee. XXIX. In France. I don't know where to stop. *À propos,* I want a book about Paris, and the *first return of the émigrés* and all up to the *Cent Jours:* d'ye ken anything in my way? I want in particular to know about them and the Napoleonic functionaries and officers, and to get the colour and some vital details of the business of exchange of departments from one side to the other.* Ten chapters are drafted and VIII. re-copied by me, but will want another dressing for luck. It is merely a story of adventure, rambling along; but this is perhaps the guard that 'sets my genius best,' as Alan might have said. I wish I could feel as easy about the other! But there, all novels are a heavy burthen while they are doing, and a sensible disappointment when they are done.

For God's sake, let me have a copy of the new German Samoa White Book. R. L. S.

To Austin Strong

January 27, 1893

Dear General Hoskyns,—I have the honour to report as usual. Your giddy mother having gone planting a flower-garden, I am obliged to write with my own hand, and, of course, nobody will be able to read it. This has been a very mean kind of a month. Aunt Maggie left with the influenza. We have heard of her from Sydney, and she is all right again; but we have inherited her influenza, and it made a poor place of Vailima. We had Talolo, Mitaele, Sosimo,

* Vitrolle's *Mémoires* and the "1814" and "1815" of M. Henri Houssaye were sent accordingly.

Iopu, Sina, Misifolo, and myself, all sick in bed at the same time; and was not that a pretty dish to set before the king! The big hall of the new house having no furniture, the sick pitched their tents in it,—I mean their mosquito-nets,—like a military camp. The Tamaitai and your mother went about looking after them, and managed to get us something to eat. Henry, the good boy! though he was getting it himself, did housework, and went round at night from one mosquito-net to another, praying with the sick. Sina, too, was as good as gold, and helped us greatly. We shall always like her better. All the time—I do not know how they managed—your mother found the time to come and write for me; and for three days, as I had my old trouble on, and had to play dumb man, I dictated a novel in the deaf-and-dumb alphabet. But now we are all recovered, and getting to feel quite fit. A new paddock has been made; the wires come right up to the top of the hill, pass within twenty yards of the big clump of flowers (if you remember that) and by the end of the pineapple patch. The Tamaitai and your mother and I all sleep in the upper story of the new house. Uncle Lloyd is alone in the workmen's cottage; and there is nobody at all at night in the old house, but ants and cats and mosquitos. The whole inside of the new house is varnished. It is a beautiful golden brown by day, and in lamplight all black, and sparkle. In the corner of the hall the new safe is built in, and looks as if it had millions of pounds in it; but I do not think there is much more than twenty dollars and a spoon or two; so the man that opens it will have a great deal of trouble for nothing. Our great fear is lest we should forget how to open it; but it will look just as well if we can't. Poor Misifolo—you remember the thin boy, do you not?—had a desperate attack of influenza; and he was in a great taking. You would not like to be very sick in some savage place in the islands, and have only the savages to doctor you. Well, that was just the

way he felt. "It is all very well," he thought, "to let these childish white people doctor a sore foot or a toothache, but this is serious—I might die of this! For goodness' sake, let me get away into a draughty native house, where I can lie in cold gravel, eat green bananas, and have a real grown-up tattooed man to raise spirits and say charms over me." A day or two we kept him quiet, and got him much better. Then he said he *must* go. He had had his back broken in his own island, he said; it had come broken again, and he must go away to a native house, and have it mended. "Confound your back!" said we; "lie down in your bed." At last, one day, his fever was quite gone, and he could give his mind to the broken back entirely. He lay in the hall; I was in the room alone; all morning and noon I heard him roaring like a bull calf, so that the floor shook with it. It was plainly humbug; it had the humbugging sound of a bad child crying; and about two of the afternoon we were worn out, and told him he might go. Off he set. He was in some kind of a white wrapping, with a great white turban on his head, as pale as clay, and walked leaning on a stick. But, O, he was a glad boy to get away from these foolish, savage, childish white people, and get his broken back put right by somebody with some sense. He nearly died that night, and little wonder! but he has now got better again, and long may it last! All the others were quite good, trusted us wholly, and stayed to be cured where they were. But then he was quite right, if you look at it from his point of view; for, though we may be very clever, we do not set up to cure broken backs. If a man has his back broken, we white people can do nothing at all but bury him. And was he not wise, since that was his complaint, to go to folks who could do more?

Best love to yourself, and Louie, and Aunt Nellie, and apologies for so dull a letter, from your respectful and affectionate

UNCLE LOUIS.

To Charles Baxter

Telling how the projected tale, *The Pearl Fisher,* had been cut down and in its new form was to be called *The Schooner Farallone* (afterwards changed to *The Ebb-Tide*).

[*Vailima, February,* 1893]

My dear Charles,—I have had the influenza, as I believe you know: this has been followed by two goes of my old friend Bloodie Jacke, and I have had *fefe*—the island complaint—for the second time in two months. All this, and the fact that both my womenkind require to see a doctor: and some wish to see Lord Jersey before he goes home: all send me off on a month's holiday to Sydney. I may get my mail: or I may not: depends on freight, weather, and the captain's good-nature—he is one of those who most religiously fear Apia harbour: it is quite a superstition with American captains. (Odd note: American sailors, who make British hair grey by the way they carry canvas, appear to be actually *more* nervous when it comes to coast and harbour work.) This is the only holiday I have had for more than 2 years; I dare say it will be as long again before I take another. And I am going to spend a lot of money. Ahem!

On the other hand, you can prepare to dispose of the serial rights of *The Schooner Farallone:* a most grim and gloomy tale. It will run to something between *Jekyll and Hyde* and *Treasure Island.* I will not commit myself beyond this, but I anticipate from 65 to 70,000 words, could almost pledge myself not shorter than 65,000, but won't. The tale can be sent as soon as you have made arrangements; I hope to finish it in a month; six weeks, bar the worst accidents, for certain. I should say this is the butt end of what was once *The Pearl Fisher.* There is a peculiarity about this tale in its new form: it ends with a conversion! We have been tempted rather to call it *The Schooner Farallone: a tract by R. L. S. and L. O.* It would

make a boss tract; the three main characters—and there are only four—are barats, insurance frauds, thieves, and would-be murderers; so the company's good. Devil a woman there, by good luck; so it's "pure." 'Tis a most—what's the expression?—unconventional work.

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

At Sea, S.S. Mariposa, *Feb.* 19*th*, '93

My dear Colvin,—You will see from this heading that I am not dead yet nor likely to be. I was pretty considerably out of sorts, and that is indeed one reason why Fanny, Belle, and I have started out for a month's lark. To be quite exact, I think it will be about five weeks before we get home. We shall stay between two and three in Sydney. Already, though we only sailed yesterday, I am feeling as fit as a fiddle. Fanny ate a whole fowl for breakfast, to say nothing of a tower of hot cakes. Belle and I floored another hen betwixt the pair of us, and I shall be no sooner done with the present amanuensing racket than I shall put myself outside a pint of Guinness. If you think this looks like dying of consumption in Apia I can only say I differ from you. In the matter of *David*, I have never yet received my proofs at all, but shall certainly wait for your suggestions. Certainly, Chaps. 17 to 20 are the hitch, and I confess I hurried over them with both wings spread. This is doubtless what you complain of. Indeed, I placed my single reliance on Miss Grant. If she couldn't ferry me over, I felt I had to stay there.

About *Island Nights' Entertainments* all you say is highly satisfactory. Go in and win.

The extracts from the *Times* I really cannot trust myself to comment upon. They were infernally satisfactory; so, and perhaps still more so, was a letter I had at the same time from Lord Pembroke. If I

have time as I go through Auckland, I am going to see Sir George Grey.

Now I really think that's all the business. I have been rather sick and have had two small hemorrhages, but the second I believe to have been accidental. No good denying that this annoys, because it do. However, you must expect influenza to leave some harm, and my spirits, appetite, peace on earth and goodwill to men are all on a rising market. During the last week the Amanuensis was otherwise engaged, whereupon I took up, pitched into, and about one half demolished another tale, once intended to be called *The Pearl Fisher,* but now razeed and called *The Schooner Farallone.** We had a capital start, the steamer coming in at sunrise, and just giving us time to get our letters ere she sailed again. The manager of the German firm (O strange, changed days!) danced attendance upon us all morning; his boat conveyed us to and from the steamer.

Feb. 21st.—All continues well. Amanuensis bowled over for a day, but afoot again and jolly; Fanny enormously bettered by the voyage; I have been as jolly as a sandboy as usual at sea. The Amanuensis sits opposite to me writing to her offspring. Fanny is on deck. I have just supplied her with the Canadian Pacific Agent, and so left her in good hands. You should hear me at table with the Ulster purser, and a little punning microscopist called Davis. Belle does some kind of abstruse Boswellising; after the first meal, having gauged the kind of jests that would pay here, I observed "Boswell is Barred during this cruise."

23rd.—We approach Auckland and I must close my mail. All goes well with the trio. Both the ladies are hanging round a beau—the same—that I unearthed for them; I am general provider, and especially great in the beaux business. I corrected some proofs for Fanny yesterday afternoon, fell asleep over them in the saloon—and the whole ship seems to have been

* Ultimately *The Ebb-Tide.*

down beholding me. After I woke up, had a hot bath, a whisky punch and a cigarette, and went to bed, and to sleep too, at 8.30; a recrudescence of Vailima hours. Awoke to-day, and had to go to the saloon clock for the hour—no sign of dawn—all heaven grey rainy fog. Have just had breakfast, written up one letter, register and close this.

To Sidney Colvin

Bad pen, bad ink, bad light, bad blotting-paper.

S. S. Mariposa, *at Sea.*
Apia due by daybreak to-morrow, 9 *p.m.* [*March* 1*st,* 1893]

My dear Colvin,—Have had an amusing but tragic holiday, from which we return in disarray. Fanny quite sick, but I think slowly and steadily mending; Belle in a terrific state of dentistry troubles which now seem calmed; and myself with a succession of gentle colds out of which I at last succeeded in cooking up a fine pleurisy. By stopping and stewing in a perfectly airless stateroom I seem to have got rid of the pleurisy. Poor Fanny had very little fun of her visit, having been most of the time on a diet of maltine and slops—and this while the rest of us were rioting on oysters and mushrooms. Belle's only devil in the hedge was the dentist. As for me, I was entertained at the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, likewise at a sort of artistic club; made speeches at both, and may therefore be said to have been, like Saint Paul, all things to all men. I have an account of the latter racket which I meant to have enclosed in this. . . . Had some splendid photos taken, likewise a medallion by a French sculptor; met Graham, who returned with us as far as Auckland. Have seen a good deal too of Sir George Grey; what a wonderful old historic figure to be walking on your arm and recalling ancient events and instances! It makes a man small, and yet the extent to which he approved what I had done—or rather have tried to do—en-

couraged me. Sir George is an expert at least, he knows these races; he is not a small employé with an ink-pot and a Whitaker.

Take it for all in all, it was huge fun: even Fanny had some lively sport at the beginning; Belle and I all through. We got Fanny a dress on the sly, gaudy black velvet and Duchesse lace. And alas! she was only able to wear it once. But we'll hope to see more of it at Samoa; it really is lovely. Both dames are royally outfitted in silk stockings, etc. We return, as from a raid, with our spoils and our wounded. I am now very dandy: I announced two years ago that I should change. Slovenly youth, all right—not slovenly age. So really now I am pretty spruce; always a white shirt, white necktie, fresh shave, silk socks, O a great sight!—No more possible.

R. L. S.

To Charles Baxter

Of the books mentioned below, *Dr. Syntax's Tour* and Rowlandson's *Dance of Death* had been for use in furnishing customs and manners in the English part of *St. Ives; Pitcairn* is Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials of Scotland from* 1488 *to* 1624. As to the name of Stevenson and its adoption by some members of the proscribed clan of Macgregor, Stevenson had been greatly interested by the facts laid before him by his correspondent here mentioned, Mr. Macgregor Stevenson of New York, and had at first delightedly welcomed the idea that his own ancestors might have been fellow-clansmen of Rob Roy. But further correspondence on the subject of his own descent held with a trained genealogist, his namesake Mr. J. Horne Stevenson of Edinburgh, convinced him that the notion must be abandoned.

[*April*, 1893]

. . . About *The Justice-Clerk*, I long to go at it, but will first try to get a short story done. Since January I have had two severe illnesses, my boy, and some heartbreaking anxiety over Fanny; and am only now convalescing. I came down to dinner last night for the first time, and that only because the service had broken down, and to relieve an inexperienced ser-

vant. Nearly four months now I have rested my brains; and if it be true that rest is good for brains, I ought to be able to pitch in like a giant refreshed. Before the autumn, I hope to send you some *Justice-Clerk,* or *Weir of Hermiston,* as Colvin seems to prefer; I own to indecision. Received *Syntax, Dance of Death,* and *Pitcairn,* which last I have read from end to end since its arrival, with vast improvement. What a pity it stops so soon! I wonder is there nothing that seems to prolong the series? Why doesn't some young man take it up? How about my old friend Fountainhall's *Decisions?* I remember as a boy that there was some good reading there. Perhaps you could borrow me that, and send it on loan; and perhaps Laing's *Memorials* therewith; and a work I'm ashamed to say I have never read, *Balfour's Letters.* . . . I have come by accident, through a correspondent, on one very curious and interesting fact—namely, that Stevenson was one of the names adopted by the Macgregors at the proscription. The details supplied by my correspondent are both convincing and amusing; but it would be highly interesting to find out more of this.

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

These notes are in reply to a set of queries and suggestions as to points that seemed to need clearing in the tale of *Catriona,* as first published in *Atalanta* under the title *David Balfour.*

[*Vailima*] *April,* 1893

1. *Slip* 3. Davie would be *attracted* into a similar dialect, as he is later,—*e.g.* with Doig, chapter XIX. This is truly Scottish.

4, *to lightly;* correct; "to lightly" is a good regular Scots verb.

15. See Allan Ramsay's works.

15, 16. Ay, and that is one of the pigments with which I am trying to draw the character of Prestongrange. 'Tis a most curious thing to render that kind,

insignificant mask. To make anything precise is to risk my effect. And till the day he died, Davie was never sure of what P. was after. Not only so; very often P. didn't know himself. There was an element of mere liking for Davie; there was an element of being determined, in case of accidents, to keep well with him. He hoped his Barbara would bring him to her feet, besides, and make him manageable. That was why he sent him to Hope Park with them. But Davie cannot *know;* I give you the inside of Davie, and my method condemns me to give only the outside both of Prestongrange and his policy.

—I'll give my mind to the technicalities. Yet to me they seem a part of the story, which is historical, after all.

—I think they wanted Alan to escape. But when or where to say so? I will try.

—20, *Dean.* I'll try and make that plainer.

Chap. XIII., I fear it has to go without blows. If I could get the pair—No, can't be.

—XIV. All right, will abridge.

—XV.—I'd have to put a note to every word; and he who can't read Scots can *never* enjoy Tod Lapraik.

—XVII. Quite right. I *can* make this plainer, and will.

—XVIII. I know, but I have to hurry here; this is the broken back of my story; some business briefly transacted, I am leaping for Barbara's apron-strings.

Slip 57. Quite right again; I shall make it plain.

Chap. XX. I shall make all these points clear. About Lady Prestongrange (not *Lady* Grant, only *Miss* Grant, my dear, though *Lady* Prestongrange, quoth the dominie) I am taken with your idea of her death, and have a good mind to substitute a featureless aunt.

Slip 78. I don't see how to lessen this effect. There is really not much said of it; and I know Catriona did it. But I'll try.

—89. I know. This is an old puzzle of mine. You see C.'s dialect is not wholly a bed of roses. If only I knew the Gaelic. Well, I'll try for another expression.

The end. I shall try to work it over. James was at Dunkirk ordering post-horses for his own retreat. Catriona did have her suspicions aroused by the letter, and, careless gentleman, I told you so—or she did at least—Yes, the blood money.—I am bothered about the portmanteau; it is the presence of Catriona that bothers me; the rape of the pockmantie is historic. . . .

To me, I own, it seems in the proof a very pretty piece of workmanship. David himself I refuse to discuss; he *is*. The Lord Advocate I think a strong sketch of a very difficult character, James More, sufficient; and the two girls very pleasing creatures. But O dear me, I came near losing my heart to Barbara! I am not quite so constant as David, and even he—well, he didn't know it, anyway! *Tod Lapraik* is a piece of living Scots: If I had never writ anything but that and *Thrawn Janet*, still I'd have been a writer. The defects of *D. B.* are inherent, I fear. But on the whole, I am far indeed from being displeased with the tailie. One thing is sure, there has been no such drawing of Scots character since Scott; and even he never drew a full length like Davie, with his shrewdness and simplicity, and stockishness and charm. Yet, you'll see, the public won't want it; they want more Alan! Well, they can't get it. And readers of *Tess* can have no use for my David, and his innocent but real love affairs.

I found my fame much grown on this return to civilisation. *Digito monstrari* is a new experience; people all looked at me in the streets in Sydney; and it was very queer. Here, of course, I am only the white chief in the Great House to the natives; and to the whites, either an ally or a foe. It is a much healthier state of matters. If I lived in an atmosphere of adulation, I should end by kicking against the pricks. O my beautiful forest, O my beautiful shining, windy house, what a joy it was to behold them again! No chance to take myself too seriously here.

The difficulty of the end is the mass of matter to be attended to, and the small time left to transact it in. I mean from Alan's danger of arrest. But I have just seen my way out, I do believe.

Easter Sunday.—I have now got as far as slip 28, and finished the chapter of the law of technicalities. Well, these seemed to me always of the essence of the story, which is the story of a *cause célèbre;* moreover, they are the justification of my inventions; if these men went so far (granting Davie sprung on them) would they not have gone so much further? But of course I knew they were a difficulty; determined to carry them through in a conversation; approached this (it seems) with cowardly anxiety; and filled it with gabble, sir, gabble. I have left all my facts, but have removed 42 lines. I should not wonder but what I'll end by re-writing it. It is not the technicalities that shocked you, it was my bad art. It is very strange that x. should be so good a chapter and ix. so uncompromisingly bad. It looks as if xi. also would have to be re-formed. If x had not cheered me up, I should be in doleful dumps, but x. is alive anyway, and life is all in all.

Thursday, April 5th.—Well, there's no disguise possible; Fanny is not well, and we are miserably anxious.

Friday, 7th.—I am thankful to say the new medicine relieved her at once. A crape has been removed from the day for all of us. To make things better, the morning is ah! such a morning as you have never seen; heaven upon earth for sweetness, freshness, depth upon depth of unimaginable colour, and a huge silence broken at this moment only by the far-away murmur of the Pacific and the rich piping of a single bird. You can't conceive what a relief this is; it seems a new world. She has such extraordinary recuperative power that I do hope for the best. I am as tired as man can be. This is a great trial to a family, and I thank God it seems as if ours was going to bear it well. And O! if it only lets up, it will be but a

pleasant memory. We are all seedy, bar Lloyd: Fanny, as per above; self nearly extinct; Belle, utterly overworked and bad toothache; Cook, down with a bad foot; Butler, prostrate with a bad leg. Eh, what a faim'ly!

Sunday.—Grey heaven, raining torrents of rain; occasional thunder and lightning. Everything to dispirit; but my invalids are really on the mend. The rain roars like the sea; in the sound of it there is a strange and ominous suggestion of an approaching tramp; something nameless and measureless seems to draw near, and strikes me cold, and yet is welcome. I lie quiet in bed to-day, and think of the universe with a good deal of equanimity. I have, at this moment, but the one objection to it; the *fracas* with which it proceeds. I do not love noise; I am like my grandfather in that; and so many years in these still islands has ingrained the sentiment perhaps. Here are no trains, only men pacing barefoot. No carts or carriages; at worst the rattle of a horse's shoes among the rocks. Beautiful silence; and so soon as this robustious rain takes off, I am to drink of it again by oceanfuls.

April 16th.—Several pages of this letter destroyed as beneath scorn; the wailings of a crushed worm; matter in which neither you nor I can take stock. Fanny is distinctly better, I believe all right now; I too am mending, though I have suffered from crushed wormery, which is not good for the body, and damnation to the soul. I feel to-night a baseless anxiety to write a lovely poem *à propos des bottes de ma grand'mère, qui étaient à revers.* I see I am idiotic. I'll try the poem.

17th.—The poem did not get beyond plovers and lovers. I am still, however, harassed by the unauthentic Muse; if I cared to encourage her—but I have not the time, and anyway we are at the vernal equinox. It is funny enough, but my pottering verses are usually made (like the God-gifted organ voices) at

the autumnal; and this seems to hold at the Antipodes. There is here some odd secret of Nature. I cannot speak of politics; we wait and wonder. It seems (this is partly a guess) Ide won't take the C. J. ship, unless the islands are disarmed; and that England hesitates and holds off. By my own idea, strongly corroborated by Sir George, I am writing no more letters. But I have put as many irons in against this folly of the disarming as I could manage. It did not reach my ears till nearly too late. What a risk to take! What an expense to incur! And for how poor a gain! Apart from the treachery of it. My dear fellow, politics is a vile and a bungling business. I used to think meanly of the plumber; but how he shines beside the politician!

Thursday.—A general, steady advance; Fanny really quite chipper and jolly—self on the rapid mend, and with my eye on *forests* that are to fall—and my finger on the axe, which wants stoning.

Saturday, 22.—Still all for the best; but I am having a heartbreaking time over *David*. I have nearly all corrected. But have to consider *The Heather on Fire*, *The Wood by Silvermills*, and the last chapter. They all seem to me off colour; and I am not fit to better them yet. No proof has been sent of the title, contents, or dedication.

To A. Conan Doyle

The reference in the postscript here is, I believe, to the Journals of the Society for Psychical Research.

Vailima, Apia, Samoa, April 5th, 1893

Dear Sir,—You have taken many occasions to make yourself agreeable to me, for which I might in decency have thanked you earlier. It is now my turn; and I hope you will allow me to offer you my compliments on your very ingenious and very interesting adventures of Sherlock Holmes. That is the class of literature that I like when I have the toothache. As a

matter of fact, it was a pleurisy I was enjoying when I took the volume up; and it will interest you as a medical man to know that the cure was for the moment effectual. Only the one thing troubles me: can this be my old friend Joe Bell?—I am, yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P. S.—And lo, here is your address supplied me here in Samoa! But do not take mine, O frolic fellow Spookist, from the same source; mine is wrong.

R. L. S.

TO SIDNEY COLVIN

The outbreak of hostilities was at this date imminent between Mulinuu (the party of Laupepa, recognised and supported by the Three Powers) and Malie (the party of Mataafa).

[*Vailima*] 25*th April* [1893]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—To-day early I sent down to Maben (Secretary of State) an offer to bring up people from Malie, keep them in my house, and bring them down day by day for so long as the negotiations should last. I have a favourable answer so far. This I would not have tried, had not old Sir George Grey put me on my mettle; "Never despair," was his word; and "I am one of the few people who have lived long enough to see how true that is." Well, thereupon I plunged in; and the thing may do me great harm, but yet I do not think so—for I think jealousy will prevent the trial being made. And at any rate it is another chance for this distracted archipelago of children, sat upon by a clique of fools. If, by the gift of God, I can do—I am allowed to try to do—and succeed: but no, the prospect is too bright to be entertained.

To-day we had a ride down to Tanugamanono, and then by the new wood paths. One led us to a beautiful clearing, with four native houses; taro, yams, and

the like, excellently planted, and old Folau—"the Samoan Jew"—sitting and whistling there in his new-found and well-deserved well-being. It was a good sight to see a Samoan thus before the world. Further up, on our way home, we saw the world clear, and the wide die of the shadow lying broad; we came but a little further, and found in the borders of the bush a banyan. It must have been 150 feet in height; the trunk, and its acolytes, occupied a great space; above that, in the peaks of the branches, quite a forest of ferns and orchids were set; and over all again the huge spread of the boughs rose against the bright west, and sent their shadow miles to the eastward. I have not often seen anything more satisfying than this vast vegetable.

Sunday.—A heavenly day again! the world all dead silence, save when, from far down below us in the woods, comes up the crepitation of the little wooden drum that beats to church. Scarce a leaf stirs; only now and again a great, cool gush of air that makes my papers fly, and is gone.—The king of Samoa has refused my intercession between him and Mataafa; and I do not deny this is a good riddance to me of a difficult business, in which I might very well have failed. What else is to be done for these silly folks?

May 12th.—And this is where I had got to, before the mail arrives with, I must say, a real gentlemanly letter from yourself. Sir, that is the sort of letter I want! Now, I'll make my little proposal.* I will accept *Child's Play* and *Pan's Pipes*. Then I want *Pastoral, The Manse, The Islet,* leaving out if you like all the prefacial matter and beginning at I. Then the portrait of Robert Hunter, beginning "Whether he was originally big or little," and ending "fearless and gentle." So much for *Mem. and Portraits. Beggars,* sections I. and II., *Random Memories* II., and *Lantern*

*For a volume of selected *Essays*, containing the pick of *Virginibus Puerisque, Memories and Portraits,* and *Across the Plains.*

Bearers; I'm agreeable. These are my selections. I don't know about *Pulvis et Umbra* either, but must leave that to you. But just what you please.

About *Davie* I elaborately wrote last time, but still *Davie* is not done; I am grinding singly at *The Ebb-Tide,* as we now call the *Farallone;* the most of it will go this mail. About the following, let there be no mistake: I will not write the abstract of *Kidnapped;* write it who will, I will not. Boccaccio must have been a clever fellow to write both argument and story; I am not, *et je me récuse.*

We call it *The Ebb-Tide: a Trio and Quartette;* but that secondary name you may strike out if it seems dull to you. The book, however, falls in two halves, when the fourth character appears. I am on p. 82 if you want to know, and expect to finish on I suppose 110 or so; but it goes slowly, as you may judge from the fact that this three weeks past, I have only struggled from p. 58 to p. 82: twenty-four pages, *et encore* sure to be rewritten, in twenty-one days. This is no prize-taker; not much Waverley Novels about this!

May 16th.—I believe it will be ten chapters of *The Ebb-Tide* that go to you; the whole thing should be completed in I fancy twelve; and the end will follow punctually next mail. It is my great wish that this might get into *The Illustrated London News* for Gordon Browne to illustrate. For whom, in case he should get the job, I give you a few notes. A purao is a tree giving something like a fig with flowers. He will find some photographs of an old marine curiosity shop in my collection, which may help him. Attwater's settlement is to be entirely overshadowed everywhere by tall palms; see photographs of Fakarava: the verandahs of the house are 12 ft. wide. Don't let him forget the Figure Head, for which I have a great use in the last chapter. It stands just clear of the palms on the crest of the beach at the head of the pier; the flag-staff not far off; the pier he will understand

is perhaps three feet above high water, not more at any price. The sailors of the *Farallone* are to be dressed like white sailors of course. For other things, I remit this excellent artist to my photographs.

I can't think what to say about the tale, but it seems to me to go off with a considerable bang; in fact, to be an extraordinary work: but whether popular! Attwater is a no end of a courageous attempt, I think you will admit; how far successful is another affair. If my island ain't a thing of beauty, I'll be damned. Please observe Wiseman and Wishart; for incidental grimness, they strike me as in it. Also, kindly observe the Captain and *Adar;* I think that knocks spots. In short, as you see, I'm a trifle vainglorious. But O, it has been such a grind! The devil himself would allow a man to brag a little after such a crucifixion! And indeed I'm only bragging for a change before I return to the darned thing lying waiting for me on p. 88, where I last broke down. I break down at every paragraph, I may observe; and lie here and sweat, till I can get one sentence wrung out after another. Strange doom; after having worked so easily for so long! Did ever anybody see such a story of four characters?

Later, 2.30.—It may interest you to know that I am entirely *tapu,* and live apart in my chambers like a caged beast. Lloyd has a bad cold, and Graham and Belle are getting it. Accordingly, I dwell here without the light of any human countenance or voice, and strap away at *The Ebb-Tide* until (as now) I can no more. Fanny can still come, but is gone to glory now, or to her garden. Page 88 is done, and must be done over again to-morrow, and I confess myself exhausted. Pity a man who can't work on along when he has nothing else on earth to do! But I have ordered Jack, and am going for a ride in the bush presently to refresh the machine; then back to a lonely dinner and durance vile. I acquiesce in this hand of fate, for

I think another cold just now would just about do for me. I have scarce yet recovered the two last.

May 18th.—My progress is crabwise, and I fear only IX chapters will be ready for the mail. I am on p. 88 again, and with half an idea of going back again to 85. We shall see when we come to read: I used to regard reading as pleasure in my old light days. All the house are down with the iffluenza in a body, except Fanny and me. The iffluenza appears to become endemic here, but it has always been a scourge in the islands. Witness the beginning of *The Ebb-Tide,* which was observed long before the Iffle had distinguished himself at home by such Napoleonic conquests. I am now of course "quite a recluse," and it is very stale, and there is no amanuensis to carry me over my mail, to which I shall have to devote many hours that would have been more usefully devoted to *The Ebb-Tide.* For you know you can dictate at all hours of the day and at any odd moment; but to sit down and write with your red right hand is a very different matter.

May 20th.—Well, I believe I've about finished the thing, I mean as far as the mail is to take it. Chapter X. is now in Lloyd's hands for remarks, and extends in its present form to p. 93 incl. On the 12th May, I see by looking back, I was on p. 82, not for the first time; so that I have made 11 pages in nine livelong days. Well! up a high hill he heaved a huge round stone. But this Flaubert business must be resisted in the premises. Or is it the result of iffluenza? God forbid. Fanny is down now, and the last link that bound me to my fellow-men is severed. I sit up here, and write, and read Renan's *Origines,* which is certainly devilish interesting; I read his Nero yesterday, it is very good, O, very good! But he is quite a Michelet; the general views, and such a piece of character painting, excellent; but his method sheer lunacy. You can see him take up the block which he had just rejected, and make of it the corner-

stone; a maddening way to deal with authorities; and the result so little like history that one almost blames oneself for wasting time. But the time is not wasted; the conspectus is always good, and the blur that remains on the mind is probably just enough. I have been enchanted with the unveiling of Revelations. Grigsby! what a lark! And how picturesque that return of the false Nero! The Apostle John is rather discredited. And to think how one had read the thing so often, and never understood the attacks upon St. Paul. I remember when I was a child, and we came to the Four Beasts that were all over eyes, the sickening terror with which I was filled. If that was Heaven, what, in the name of Davy Jones and the aboriginal nightmare, could Hell be? Take it for all in all, *L'Antéchrist* is worth reading. The *Histoire d'Israël* did not surprise me much; I had read those Hebrew sources with more intelligence than the New Testament, and was quite prepared to admire Ahab and Jezebel, etc. Indeed, Ahab has always been rather a hero of mine; I mean since the years of discretion.

May 21*st*.—And here I am back again on p. 85! the last chapter demanding an entire revision, which accordingly it is to get. And where my mail is to come in, God knows! This forced, violent, alembicated style is most abhorrent to me; it can't be helped; the note was struck years ago on the *Janet Nicoll*, and has to be maintained somehow; and I can only hope the intrinsic horror and pathos, and a kind of fierce glow of colour there is to it, and the surely remarkable wealth of striking incident, may guide our little shallop into port. If Gordon Browne is to get it he should see the Brassey photographs of Papeete. But mind, the three waifs were never in the town; only on the beach and in the calaboose. By George, but it's a good thing to illustrate for a man like that! Fanny is all right again. False alarm! I was down yesterday afternoon at Papauta, and heard much growling

of war, and the delightful news that the C. J. and the President are going to run away from Mulinuu and take refuge in the Tivoli hotel.

23*rd*. *Mail day.—The Ebb-Tide,* all but (I take it) fifteen pages, is now in your hands—possibly only about eleven pp. It is hard to say. But there it is, and you can do your best with it. Personally, I believe I would in this case make even a sacrifice to get Gordon Browne and copious illustration. I guess in ten days I shall have finished with it; then I go next to *D. Balfour,* and get the proofs ready: a nasty job for me, as you know. And then? Well, perhaps I'll take a go at the family history. I think that will be wise, as I am so much off work. And then, I suppose, *Weir of Hermiston,* but it may be anything. I am discontented with *The Ebb-Tide,* naturally; there seems such a veil of words over it; and I like more and more naked writing; and yet sometimes one has a longing for full colour and there comes the veil again. *The Young Chevalier* is in very full colour, and I fear it for that reason.—Ever,

R. L. S.

To S. R. Crockett

Glencorse Church in the Pentlands, mentioned by Stevenson with so much emotion in the course of this letter, served him for the scene of Chapter VI. in *Weir of Hermiston,* where his old associations and feelings in connection with the place have so admirably inspired him.

Vailima, Samoa, May 17*th,* 1893

Dear Mr. Crockett,—I do not owe you two letters, nor yet nearly one, sir! The last time I heard of you, you wrote about an accident, and I sent you a letter to my lawyer, Charles Baxter, which does not seem to have been presented, as I see nothing of it in his accounts. Query, was that lost? I should not like you to think I had been so unmannerly and so inhuman. If you have written since, your letter also has mis-

carried, as is much the rule in this part of the world, unless you register.

Your book is not yet to hand, but will probably follow next month. I detected you early in the *Bookman,* which I usually see, and noted you in particular as displaying a monstrous ingratitude about the footnote. Well, mankind is ungrateful; "Man's ingratitude to man makes countless thousands mourn," quo' Rab—or words to that effect. By the way, an anecdote of a cautious sailor: "Bill, Bill," says I to him, "*or words to that effect.*"

I shall never take that walk by the Fisher's Tryst and Glencorse. I shall never see Auld Reekie. I shall never set my foot again upon the heather. Here I am until I die, and here will I be buried. The word is out and the doom written. Or, if I do come, it will be a voyage to a further goal, and in fact a suicide; which, however, if I could get my family all fixed up in the money way, I might, perhaps, perform, or attempt. But there is a plaguey risk of breaking down by the way; and I believe I shall stay here until the end comes like a good boy, as I am. If I did it, I should put upon my trunk: "Passenger to—Hades."

How strangely wrong your information is! In the first place, I should never carry a novel to Sydney; I should post it from here. In the second place, *Weir of Hermiston* is as yet scarce begun. It's going to be excellent, no doubt; but it consists of about twenty pages. I have a tale, a shortish tale in length, but it has proved long to do. *The Ebb-Tide,* some part of which goes home this mail. It is by me and Mr. Osbourne, and is really a singular work. There are only four characters, and three of them are bandits—well, two of them are, and the third is their comrade and accomplice. It sounds cheering, doesn't it? Barratry, and drunkenness, and vitriol, and I cannot tell you all what, are the beams of the roof. And yet—I don't know—I sort of think there's something in it.

You'll see (which is more than I ever can) whether Davis and Attwater come off or not.

Weir of Hermiston is a much greater undertaking, and the plot is not good, I fear; but Lord Justice-Clerk Hermiston ought to be a plum. Of other schemes, more or less executed, it skills not to speak.

I am glad to hear so good an account of your activity and interest; and shall always hear from you with pleasure; though I am, and must continue, a mere sprite of the ink-bottle, unseen in the flesh. Please remember me to your wife and to the four-year-old sweetheart, if she be not too engrossed with higher matters. Do you know where the road crosses the burn under Glencorse Church? Go there, and say a prayer for me: *morituri salutat.* See that it's a sunny day; I would like it to be a Sunday, but that's not possible in the premises; and stand on the right-hand bank just where the road goes down into the water, and shut your eyes, and if I don't appear to you! well, it can't be helped, and will be extremely funny.

I have no concern here but to work and to keep an eye on this distracted people. I live just now wholly alone in an upper room of my house, because the whole family are down with influenza, bar my wife and myself. I get my horse up sometimes in the afternoon and have a ride in the woods; and I sit here and smoke and write, and re-write, and destroy, and rage at my own impotence, from six in the morning till eight at night, with trifling and not always agreeable intervals for meals.

I am sure you chose wisely to keep your country charge. There a minister can be something, not in a town. In a town, the most of them are empty houses —and public speakers. Why should you suppose your book will be slated because you have no friends? A new writer, if he is any good, will be acclaimed generally with more noise than he deserves. But by this time you will know for certain.—I am, yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—Be it known to this fluent generation that I, R. L. S., in the forty-third year of my age and the twentieth of my professional life, wrote twenty-four pages in twenty-one days, working from six to eleven, and again in the afternoon from two to four or so, without fail or interruption. Such are the gifts the gods have endowed us withal; such was the facility of this prolific writer!

R. L. S.

To Augustus St. Gaudens

Vailima, Samoa, May 29th, 1893

My dear God-like Sculptor,—I wish in the most delicate manner in the world to insinuate a few commissions:—

No. 1. Is for a couple of copies of my medallion, as gilt-edged and high-toned as it is possible to make them. One is for our house here, and should be addressed as above. The other is for my friend Sidney Colvin, and should be addressed—Sidney Colvin, Esq., Keeper of the Print Room, British Museum, London.

No. 2. This is a rather large order, and demands some explanation. Our house is lined with varnished wood of a dark ruddy colour, very beautiful to see; at the same time, it calls very much for gold; there is a limit to picture frames, and really you know there has to be a limit to the pictures you put inside of them. Accordingly, we have had an idea of a certain kind of decoration, which, I think, you might help us to make practical. What we want is an alphabet of gilt letters (very much such as people play with), and all mounted on spikes like drawing-pins; say two spikes to each letter, one at top, and one at bottom. Say that they were this height, I and that you chose a model of some really exquisitely fine, clear type from some Roman monument, and that they were made

either of metal or some composition gilt—the point is, could not you, in your land of wooden houses, get a manufacturer to take the idea and manufacture them at a venture, so that I could get two or three hundred pieces or so at a moderate figure? You see, suppose you entertain an honoured guest, when he goes he leaves his name in gilt letters on your walls; an infinity of fun and decoration can be got out of hospitable and festive mottoes; and the doors of every room can be beautified by the legend of their names. I really think there is something in the idea, and you might be able to push it with the brutal and licentious manufacturer, using my name if necessary, though I should think the name of the god-like sculptor would be more germane. In case you should get it started, I should tell you that we should require commas in order to write the Samoan language, which is full of words written thus: la'u, ti'e ti'e. As the Samoan language uses but a very small proportion of the consonants, we should require a double or treble stock of all vowels and of F, G, L, U, N, P, S, T, and V.

The other day in Sydney, I think you might be interested to hear, I was sculpt a second time by a man called ——, as well as I can remember and read. I mustn't criticise a present, and he had very little time to do it in. It is thought by my family to be an excellent likeness of Mark Twain. This poor fellow, by the by, met with the devil of an accident. A model of a statue which he had just finished with a desperate effort, was smashed to smithereens on its way to exhibition.

Please be sure and let me know if anything is likely to come of this letter business, and the exact cost of each letter, so that I may count the cost before ordering.—Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Sidney Colvin

Relating the toilsome completion of *The Ebb-Tide,* and beginning of the account of his grandfather, Robert Stevenson, in *History of a Family of Engineers.*

[*Vailima*] 29*th May,* [1893]

My dear Colvin,—Still grinding at Chap. xi. I began many days ago on p. 93, and am still on p. 93, which is exhilarating, but the thing takes shape all the same and should make a pretty lively chapter for an end of it. For xii. is only a footnote *ad explicandum.*

June the 1*st.*—Back on p. 93. I was on 100 yesterday, but read it over and condemned it.

10 *a.m.*—I have worked up again to 97, but how? The deuce fly away with literature, for the basest sport in creation. But it's got to come straight! and if possible, so that I may finish *D. Balfour* in time for the same mail. What a getting upstairs! This is Flaubert outdone. Belle, Graham, and Lloyd leave to-day on a malaga down the coast; to be absent a week or so: this leaves Fanny, me, and ——, who seems a nice, kindly fellow.

June 2*nd.*—I am nearly dead with dyspepsia, oversmoking, and unremunerative overwork. Last night, I went to bed by seven; woke up again about ten for a minute to find myself light-headed and altogether off my legs; went to sleep again, and woke this morning fairly fit. I have crippled on to p. 101, but I haven't read it yet, so do not boast. What kills me is the frame of mind of one of the characters; I cannot get it through. Of course that does not interfere with my total inability to write; so that yesterday I was a living half-hour upon a single clause and have a gallery of variants that would surprise you. And this sort of trouble (which I cannot avoid) unfortunately produces nothing when done but alembication and the farfetched. Well, read it with mercy!

8 *p.m.*—Going to bed. Have read it, and believe the chapter practically done at last. But Lord! it has been a business.

June 3rd, 8.15.—The draft is finished, the end of Chapter XII. and the tale, and I have only eight pages *wiederzuarbeiten.* This is just a cry of joy in passing.

10.30.—Knocked out of time. Did 101 and 102. Alas, no more to-day, as I have to go down town to a meeting. Just as well though, as my thumb is about done up.

Sunday, June 4th.—Now for a little snippet of my life. Yesterday, 12.30, in a heavenly day of sun and trade, I mounted my horse and set off. A boy opens my gate for me. "Sleep and long life! A blessing on your journey," says he. And I reply "Sleep, long life! A blessing on the house!" Then on, down the lime lane, a rugged, narrow, winding way, that seems almost as if it was leading you into Lyonesse, and you might see the head and shoulders of a giant looking in. At the corner of the road I meet the inspector of taxes, and hold a diplomatic interview with him; he wants me to pay taxes on the new house; I am informed I should not till next year; and we part, *re infecta,* he promising to bring me decisions, I assuring him that, if I find any favouritism, he will find me the most recalcitrant tax-payer on the island. Then I have a talk with an old servant by the wayside. A little further I pass two children coming up. "Love!" say I; "are you two chiefly-proceeding inland?" and they say "Love! yes!" and the interesting ceremony is finished. Down to the post office, where I find Vitrolles and (Heaven reward you!) the White Book, just arrived per *Upolu,* having gone the wrong way round, by Australia; also six copies of *Island Nights' Entertainments.* Some of Weatherall's illustrations are very clever; but O Lord! the lagoon! I did say it was "shallow," but, O dear, not so shallow as that a man could stand up in it! I had still

an hour to wait for my meeting, so Postmaster Davis let me sit down in his room and I had a bottle of beer in, and read *A Gentleman of France.** Have you seen it coming out in Longman's? My dear Colvin! 'tis the most exquisite pleasure; a real chivalrous yarn, like the Dumas' and yet unlike. Thereafter to the meeting of the five newspaper proprietors. Business transacted, I have to gallop home and find the boys waiting to be paid at the doorstep.

Monday, 5th.—Yesterday, Sunday, the Rev. Dr. Brown, secretary to the Wesleyan Mission, and the man who made the war in the Western Island and was tried for his life in Fiji, came up, and we had a long, important talk about Samoa. O, if I could only talk to the home men! But what would it matter? none of them know, none of them care. If we could only have Macgregor here with his schooner, you would hear of no more troubles in Samoa. That is what we want; a man that knows and likes the natives, *qui paye de sa personne,* and is not afraid of hanging when necessary. We don't want bland Swedish humbugs, and fussy, footering German barons. That way the maelstrom lies, and we shall soon be in it.

I have to-day written 103 and 104, all perfectly wrong, and shall have to rewrite them. This tale is devilish, and Chapter XI. the worst of the lot. The truth is of course that I am wholly worked out; but it's nearly done, and shall go somehow according to promise. I go against all my gods, and say it is *not worth while* to massacre yourself over the last few pages of a rancid yarn, that the reviewers will quite justly tear to bits. As for *D. B.*, no hope, I fear, this mail, but we'll see what the afternoon does for me.

4.15—Well, it's done. Those tragic 16 pp. are at last finished, and I have put away thirty-two pages of chips, and have spent thirteen days about as nearly in Hell as a man could expect to live through. It's done, and of course it ain't worth while, and who cares?

* By Stanley Weyman.

There it is, and about as grim a tale as was ever written, and as grimy, and as hateful.

SACRED
TO THE MEMORY
OF
J. L. HUISH,
BORN 1856, AT HACKNEY,
LONDON,
ACCIDENTALLY KILLED
UPON THIS ISLAND,
10TH SEPTEMBER, 1889.

Tuesday, 6th.—I am exulting to do nothing. It pours with rain from the westward, very unusual kind of weather; I was standing out on the little verandah in front of my room this morning, and there went through me or over me a wave of extraordinary and apparently baseless emotion. I literally staggered. And then the explanation came, and I knew I had found a frame of mind and body that belonged to Scotland, and particularly to the neighbourhood of Callander. Very odd these identities of sensation, and the world of connotations implied; highland huts, and peat smoke, and the brown swirling rivers, and wet clothes, and whisky, and the romance of the past, and that indescribable bite of the whole thing at a man's heart, which is—or rather lies at the bottom of—a story.

I don't know if you are a Barbey d'Aurévillyan. I am. I have a great delight in his Norman stories. Do you know the *Chevalier des Touches* and *L'Ensorcelée?* They are admirable, they reek of the soil and the past. But I was rather thinking just now of *Le Rideau Cramoisi,* and its adorable setting of the stopped coach, the dark street, the home-going in the inn yard, and

the red blind illuminated. Without doubt, *there* was an identity of sensation; one of those conjunctions in life that had filled Barbey full to the brim, and permanently bent his memory.

I wonder exceedingly if I have done anything at all good; and who can tell me? and why should I wish to know? In so little a while, I, and the English language, and the bones of my descendants, will have ceased to be a memory! And yet—and yet—one would like to leave an image for a few years upon men's minds—for fun. This is a very dark frame of mind, consequent on overwork and the conclusion of the excruciating *Ebb-Tide.* Adieu.

What do you suppose should be done with *The Ebb-Tide?* It would make a volume of 200 pp.; on the other hand, I might likely have some more stories soon; *The Owl, Death in the Pot, The Sleeper Awakened;* all these are possible. *The Owl* might be half as long; *The Sleeper Awakened,* ditto; *Death in the Pot* a deal shorter, I believe. Then there's *The Go-Between,* which is not impossible altogether. *The Owl, The Sleeper Awakened,* and *The Go-Between* end reasonably well; *Death in the Pot* is an ungodly massacre. O, well, *The Owl* only ends well in so far as some lovers come together, and nobody is killed at the moment, but you know they are all doomed, they are Chouan fellows.*

Friday, 9th.—Well, the mail is in; no Bluebook, depressing letter from C.; a long, amusing ramble from my mother; vast masses of Romeike; they *are* going to war now; and what will that lead to? and what has driven them to it but the persistent misconduct of these two officials? I know I ought to re-write the end of this bloody *Ebb-Tide:* well, I can't. *C'est plus*

* *The Owl* was to be a Breton story of the Revolution; *Death in the Pot,* a tale of the Santa Lucia mountains in California; the scene of *The Go-Between* would have been laid in the Pacific Islands; of *The Sleeper Awakened* I know nothing. None of them ever came to maturity.

fort que moi; it has to go the way it is, and be jowned to it! From what I make out of the reviews,* I think it would be better not to republish *The Ebb-Tide:* but keep it for other tales, if they should turn up. Very amusing how the reviews pick out one story and damn the rest! and it is always a different one. Be sure you send me the article from *Le Temps.* Talking of which, ain't it manners in France to acknowledge a dedication? I have never heard a word from Le Sieur Bourget.

Saturday, 17th.—Since I wrote this last, I have written a whole chapter of my Grandfather, and read it tonight; it was on the whole much appreciated, and I kind of hope it ain't bad myself. 'Tis a third writing, but it wants a fourth. By next mail, I believe I might send you 3 chapters. That is to say *Family Annals, The Service of the Northern Lights,* and *The Building of the Bell Rock.* Possibly even 4—*A Houseful of Boys.* I could finish my Grandfather very easy now; my father and Uncle Alan stop the way. I propose to call the book: *Northern Lights: Memoirs of a Family of Engineers.* I tell you, it is going to be a good book. My idea in sending MS. would be to get it set up; two proofs to me, one to Professor Swan, Ardchapel, Helensburgh—mark it private and confidential—one to yourself; and come on with criticisms! But I'll have to see. The total plan of the book is this—

I. Domestic Annals.
II. The Service of the Northern Lights.
III. The Building of the Bell Rock.
IV. A Household of Boys (or The Family in Baxter's Place).
V. Education of an Engineer.
VI. The Grandfather.
VII. Alan Stevenson.
VIII. Thomas Stevenson.

There will be an Introduction "The Surname of Stevenson" which has proved a mighty queer subject of inquiry. But, Lord! if I were among libraries.

* Of *Island Nights' Entertainments.*

Sunday, 18*th.*—I shall put in this envelope the end of the ever-to-be-execrated *Ebb-Tide,* or Stevenson's Blooming Error. Also, a paper apart for *David Balfour.* The slips must go in another enclosure, I suspect, owing to their beastly bulk. Anyway, there are two pieces of work off my mind, and though I could wish I had rewritten a little more of *David,* yet it was plainly to be seen it was impossible. All the points indicated by you have been brought out; but to rewrite the end, in my present state of over-exhaustion and fiction-phobia, would have been madness; and I let it go as it stood. My Grandfather is good enough for me, these days. I do not work any less; on the whole, if anything, a little more. But it is different.

The slips go to you in four packets; I hope they are what they should be, but do not think so. I am at a pitch of discontent with fiction in all its forms—or *my* forms—that prevents me being able to be even interested. I have had to stop all drink; smoking I am trying to stop also. It annoys me dreadfully: and yet if I take a glass of claret, I have a headache the next day! O, and a good headache too; none of your trifles.

Well, sir, here's to you, and farewell.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Edmund Gosse

June 10*th,* 1893

My dear Gosse,—My mother tells me you never received the very long and careful letter that I sent you more than a year ago; or is it two years?

I was indeed so much surprised at your silence that I wrote to Henry James and begged him to inquire if you had received it; his reply was an (if possible) higher power of the same silence; whereupon I bowed my head and acquiesced. But there is no doubt the letter was written and sent; and I am sorry it was lost, for it contained, among other things, an irrecoverable criticism of your father's *Life,* with a number of sugges-

tions for another edition, which struck me at the time as excellent.

Well, suppose we call that cried off, and begin as before? It is fortunate indeed that we can do so, being both for a while longer in the day. But, alas! when I see "works of the late J. A. S.," * I can see no help and no reconciliation possible. I wrote him a letter, I think, three years ago, heard in some roundabout way that he had received it, waited in vain for an answer (which had probably miscarried), and in a humour between frowns and smiles wrote to him no more. And now the strange, poignant, pathetic, brilliant creature is gone into the night, and the voice is silent that uttered so much excellent discourse; and I am sorry that I did not write to him again. Yet I am glad for him; light lie the turf! The *Saturday* is the only obituary I have seen, and I thought it very good upon the whole. I should be half tempted to write an *In Memoriam*, but I am submerged with other work. Are you going to do it? I very much admire your efforts that way; you are our only academician.

So you have tried fiction? I will tell you the truth: when I saw it announced, I was so sure you would send it to me, that I did not order it! But the order goes this mail, and I will give you news of it. Yes, honestly, fiction is very difficult; it is a terrible strain to *carry* your characters all that time. And the difficulty of according the narrative and the dialogue (in a work in the third person) is extreme. That is one reason out of half a dozen why I so often prefer the first. It is much in my mind just now, because of my last work, just off the stocks three days ago, *The Ebb-Tide:* a dreadful, grimy business in the third person, where the strain between a vilely realistic dialogue and a narrative style pitched about (in phrase) "four notes higher" than it should have been, has sown my head with grey hairs; or I believe so—if my head escaped, my heart has them.

* John Addington Symonds.

The truth is, I have a little lost my way, and stand bemused at the cross-roads. A subject? Ay, I have dozens; I have at least four novels begun, they are none good enough; and the mill waits, and I'll have to take second best. *The Tide* I make the world a present of; I expect and, I suppose, deserve to be torn to pieces; but there was all that good work lying useless, and I had to finish it!

All your news of your family is pleasant to hear. My wife has been very ill, but is now better; I may say I am ditto, *The Ebb-Tide* having left me high and dry, which is a good example of the mixed metaphor. Our home, and estate, and our boys, and the politics of the island, keep us perpetually amused and busy; and I grind away with an odd, dogged, down sensation—and an idea *in petto* that the game is about played out. I have got too realistic, and I must break the trammels —I mean I would if I could; but the yoke is heavy. I saw with amusement that Zola says the same thing; and truly the *Débâcle* was a mighty big book, I have no need for a bigger, though the last part is a mere mistake in my opinion. But the Emperor, and Sedan, and the doctor at the ambulance, and the horses in the field of battle, Lord, how gripped it is! What an epical performance! According to my usual opinion, I believe I could go over that book and leave a masterpiece by blotting and no ulterior art. But that is an old story, ever new with me. Taine gone, and Renan, and Symonds, and Tennyson, and Browning; the suns go swiftly out, and I see no suns to follow, nothing but a universal twilight of the demi-divinities, with parties like you and me and Lang beating on toy drums and playing on penny whistles about glow-worms. But Zola is big anyway; he has plenty in his belly; too much, that is all; he wrote the *Débâcle* and he wrote *La Bête humaine*, perhaps the most excruciatingly silly book that I ever read to an end. And why did I read it to an end, W. E. G.? Because the animal in me was interested in the lewdness. Not sincerely, of course, my

mind refusing to partake in it; but the flesh was slightly pleased. And when it was done, I cast it from me with a peal of laughter, and forgot it, as I would forget a Montépin. Taine is to me perhaps the chief of these losses; I did luxuriate in his *Origines;* it was something beyond literature, not quite so good, if you please, but so much more systematic, and the pages that had to be " written " always so adequate. Robespierre, Napoleon, were both excellent good.

June 18th, '93.—Well, I have left fiction wholly, and gone to *My Grandfather,* and on the whole found peace. By next month *My Grandfather* will begin to be quite grown up. I have already three chapters about as good as done; by which, of course, as you know, I mean till further notice or the next discovery. I like biography far better than fiction myself: fiction is too free. In biography you have your little handful of facts, little bits of a puzzle, and you sit and think, and fit 'em together this way and that, and get up and throw 'em down, and say damn, and go out for a walk, and it's real soothing; and when done, gives an idea of finish to the writer that is very peaceful. Of course, it's not really so finished as quite a rotten novel; it always has and always must have the incurable illogicalities of life about it, the fathoms of slack and the miles of tedium. Still, that's where the fun comes in; and when you have at last managed to shut up the castle spectre (dulness), the very outside of his door looks beautiful by contrast. There are pages in these books that may seem nothing to the reader; but you *remember what they were, you know what they might have been,* and they seem to you witty beyond comparison. In *My Grandfather* I've had (for instance) to give up the temporal order almost entirely; doubtless the temporal order is the great foe of the biographer; it is so tempting, so easy, and lo! there you are in the bog!—Ever yours,

R. L. STEVENSON.

With all kind messages from self and wife to you and yours. My wife is very much better, having been in the early part of this year alarmingly ill. She is now all right, only complaining of trifles, annoying to her, but happily not interesting to her friends. I am in a hideous state, having stopped drink and smoking; yes, both. No wine, no tobacco; and the dreadful part of it is that—looking forward—I have—what shall I say?—nauseating intimations that it ought to be for ever.

To Mrs. R. L. Stevenson

I do not know whose was the sick child for whom the Stevensons are here found providing comforts.

[*Vailima,* 1893]

Dear Fellow,—What I feared somehow! This goes down with the bed-pan; the soup will follow in course. God help the poor child! I shall likely ride down in the afternoon. The nurse is a good idea. Miss Skelton it should be, I fancy,—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

All well; particularly Belle.

P.S.—Nothing but pork! Talolo is coming down, perhaps you can direct him to inquire for beef.

Keep the bearer till Talolo comes.

To Henry James

Vailima Plantation, Samoan Islands,
June 17th, 1893

My dear Henry James,—I believe I have neglected a mail in answering yours. You will be very sorry to hear that my wife was exceedingly ill, and very glad to hear that she is better. I cannot say that I feel any more anxiety about her. We shall send you a photograph of her taken in Sydney in her customary island

habit as she walks and gardens and shrilly drills her brown assistants. She was very ill when she sat for it, which may a little explain the appearance of the photograph. It reminds me of a friend of my grandmother's who used to say when talking to younger women, "Aweel, when I was young I wasnae just exactly what ye wad call *bonny*, but I was pale, penetratin', and interestin'." I would not venture to hint that Fanny is "no bonny," but there is no doubt but that in this presentment she is "pale, penetratin', and interestin'."

As you are aware, I have been wading deep waters and contending with the great ones of the earth, not wholly without success. It is, you may be interested to hear, a dreary and infuriating business. If you can get the fools to admit one thing, they will always save their face by denying another. If you can induce them to take a step to the right hand, they generally indemnify themselves by cutting a caper to the left. I always held (upon no evidence whatever, from a mere sentiment or intuition) that politics was the dirtiest, the most foolish, and the most random of human employments. I always held, but now I know it! Fortunately, you have nothing to do with anything of the kind, and I may spare you the horror of further details.

I received from you a book by a man by the name of Anatole France. Why should I disguise it? I have no use for Anatole. He writes very prettily, and then afterwards? Baron Marbot was a different pair of shoes. So likewise is the Baron de Vitrolles, whom I am now perusing with delight. His escape in 1814 is one of the best pages I remember anywhere to have read. But Marbot and Vitrolles are dead, and what has become of the living? It seems as if literature were coming to a stand. I am sure it is with me; and I am sure everybody will say so when they have the privilege of reading *The Ebb-Tide*. My dear man, the grimness of that story is not to be depicted in words. There are only four characters, to be sure, but they are such a troop of swine! And their behaviour is really so deeply

beneath any possible standard, that on a retrospect I wonder I have been able to endure them myself until the yarn was finished. Well, there is always one thing; it will serve as a touchstone. If the admirers of Zola admire him for his pertinent ugliness and pessimism, I think they should admire this; but if, as I have long suspected, they neither admire nor understand the man's art, and only wallow in his rancidness like a hound in offal, then they will certainly be disappointed in *The Ebb-Tide*. Alas! poor little tale, it is not *even* rancid. By way of an antidote or febrifuge, I am going on at a great rate with my History of the Stevensons, which I hope may prove rather amusing, in some parts at least. The excess of materials weighs upon me. My Grandfather is a delightful comedy part; and I have to treat him besides as a serious and (in his way) a heroic figure, and at times I lose my way, and I fear in the end will blur the effect. However, *à la grâce de Dieu!* I'll make a spoon or spoil a horn. You see, I have to do the Building of the Bell Rock by cutting down and packing my grandsire's book, which I rather hope I have done, but do not know. And it makes a huge chunk of a very different style and quality between Chapters II. and IV. And it can't be helped! It is just a delightful and exasperating necessity. You know the stuff is really excellent narrative; only, perhaps there's too much of it! There is the rub. Well, well, it will be plain to you that my mind is affected; it might be with less. *The Ebb-Tide* and *Northern Lights* are a full meal for any plain man.

I have written and ordered your last book, *The Real Thing*, so be sure and don't send it. What else are you doing or thinking of doing? News I have none, and don't want any. I have had to stop all strong drink and all tobacco, and am now in a transition state between the two, which seems to be near madness. You never smoked, I think, so you can never taste the joys of stopping it. But at least you have drunk, and you can enter perhaps into my annoyance when I sud-

denly find a glass of claret or a brandy-and-water give me a splitting headache the next morning. No mistake about it; drink anything, and there's your headache. Tobacco just as bad for me. If I live through this breach of habit, I shall be a white-livered puppy indeed. Actually I am so made, or so twisted, that I do not like to think of a life without the red wine on the table and the tobacco with its lovely little coal of fire. It doesn't amuse me from a distance. I may find it the Garden of Eden when I go in, but I don't like the colour of the gate-posts. Suppose somebody said to you, you are to leave your home, and your books, and your clubs, and go out and camp in mid-Africa, and command an expedition, you would howl, and kick, and flee. I think the same of a life without wine and tobacco; and if this goes on, I've got to go and do it, sir, in the living flesh!

I thought Bourget was a friend of yours? And I thought the French were a polite race? He has taken my dedication with a stately silence that has surprised me into apoplexy. Did I go and dedicate my book* to the nasty alien, and the 'norrid Frenchman, and the Bloody Furrineer? Well, I wouldn't do it again; and unless his case is susceptible of explanation, you might perhaps tell him so over the walnuts and the wine, by way of speeding the gay hours. Sincerely, I thought my dedication worth a letter.

If anything be worth anything here below! Do you know the story of the man who found a button in his hash, and called the waiter? "What do you call that?" says he. "Well," said the waiter, "what d'you expect? Expect to find a gold watch and chain?" Heavenly apologue, is it not? I expected (rather) to find a gold watch and chain; I expected to be able to smoke to excess and drink to comfort all the days of my life; and I am still indignantly staring on this button! It's not even a button; it's a teetotal badge!—Ever yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

* *Across the Plains.*

To Austin Strong

June 18, 1893

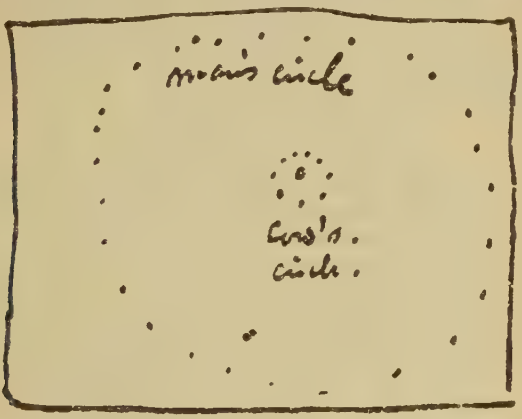
Respected Hopkins,*—This is to inform you that the Jersey cow had an elegant little cow-calf Sunday last. There was a great deal of rejoicing, of course; but I don't know whether or not you remember the Jersey cow. Whatever else she is, the Jersey cow is *not* good-natured, and Dines, who was up here on some other business, went down to the paddock to get a hood and to milk her. The hood is a little wooden board with two holes in it, by which it is hung from her horns. I do not know how he got it on, and I don't believe *he* does. Anyway, in the middle of the operation, in came Bull Bazett, with his head down, and roaring like the last trumpet. Dines and all his merry men hid behind trees in the paddock and skipped. Dines then got upon a horse, plied his spurs, and cleared for Apia. The next time he is asked to meddle with our cows, he will probably want to know the reason why. Meanwhile, there was the cow, with the board over her eyes, left tied by a pretty long rope to a small tree in the paddock, and who was to milk her? She roared,—I was going to say like a bull, but it was Bazett who did that, walking up and down, switching his tail, and the noise of the pair of them was perfectly dreadful.

Palema went up to the Bush to call Lloyd; and Lloyd came down in one of his know-all-about-it moods. "It was perfectly simple," he said. "The cow was hooded; anybody could milk her. All you had to do

* In the letters to Austin Strong his name used to be varied from Austin to Hoskyns, and from Hopkins to Hutchinson. It was the penalty Master Austin had to pay for being the particular and bosom friend of each of the one hundred and eight bluejackets that made up the crew of the British man-of-war *Curaçoa;* for, whether it was due to some bitter memories of the Revolutionary War, or to some rankling reminiscences of 1812, that even friendship could not altogether stifle (for Austin was a true American boy), they annoyed him by giving him, each one of them, a separate name.—[L. O.]

was to draw her up to the tree, and get a hitch about it." So he untied the cow, and drew her up close to the tree, and got a hitch about it right enough. And then the cow brought her intellect to bear on the subject, and proceeded to walk round the tree to get the hitch off.

Now, this is geometry, which you'll have to learn some day. The tree is the centre of two circles. The cow had a "radius" of about two feet, and went leisurely round a small circle; the man had a "radius" of about thirty feet, and either he must let the cow



get the hitch unwound, or else he must take up his two feet to about the height of his eyes and race round a big circle. This was racing and chasing.

The cow walked quietly round and round the tree to unwind herself; and first Lloyd, and then Palema, and then Lloyd again, scampered round the big circle, and fell, and got up again and bounded like a deer, to keep her hitched.

It was funny to see, but we couldn't laugh with a good heart; for every now and then (when the man who was running tumbled down) the cow would get a bit ahead; and I promise you there was then no sound of

any laughter, but we rather edged away towards the gate, looking to see the crazy beast loose, and charging us. To add to her attractions, the board had fallen partly off, and only covered one eye, giving her the look of a crazy old woman in a Sydney slum. Meanwhile, the calf stood looking on, a little perplexed, and seemed to be saying: "Well, now, is this life? It doesn't seem as if it was all it was cracked up to be. And is this my mamma? What a very impulsive lady!"

All the time, from the lower paddock, we could hear Bazett roaring like the deep seas, and if we cast our eye that way, we could see him switching his tail, as a very angry gentleman may sometimes switch his cane. And the Jersey would every now and then put up her head, and low like the pu* for dinner. And take it for all in all, it was a very striking scene. Poor Uncle Lloyd had plenty of time to regret having been in such a hurry; so had poor Palema, who was let into the business, and ran until he was nearly dead. Afterwards Palema went and sat on a gate where your mother sketched him, and she is going to send you the sketch. And the end of it? Well, we got her tied again, I really don't know how; and came stringing back to the house with our tails between our legs. That night at dinner the Tamaitai † bid us tell the boys to be very careful "not to frighten the cow." It was too much; the cow had frightened us in such fine style that we all broke down and laughed like mad.

General Hoskyns, there is no further news your Excellency, that I am aware of. But it may interest you to know that Mr. Christian held his twenty-fifth birthday yesterday—a quarter of a living century old; think of it, drink of it, innocent youth!—and asked down Lloyd and Daplyn to a feast at one o'clock, and Daplyn went at seven, and got nothing to eat at all. Whether

* The big conch-shell that was blown at certain hours every day.—[L. O.]

† Mrs. R. L. S., as she is called in Samoan; "the Lady."—[L. O.]

they had anything to drink—I know not—no, not I; but it's to be hoped so. Also, your Uncle Lloyd has stopped smoking, and he doesn't like it much. Also that your mother is most beautifully gotten up to-day, in a pink gown with a topaz stone in front of it; and is really looking like an angel, only that she isn't like an angel at all—only like your mother herself.

Also that the Tamaitai has been waxing the floor of the big room, so that it shines in the most ravishing manner; and then we insisted on coming in, and she wouldn't let us, and we came anyway, and have made the vilest mess of it—but still it shines.

Also, that I am, your Excellency's obedient servant,

UNCLE LOUIS.

To Austin Strong

MY DEAR HUTCHINSON,—This is not going to be much of a letter, so don't expect what can't be had. Uncle Lloyd and Palema made a malanga * to go over the island to Siumu, and Talolo was anxious to go also; but how could we get along without him? Well, Misifolo, the Maypole, set off on Saturday, and walked all that day down the island to beyond Faleasiu with a letter for Iopu; and Iopu and Tali and Misifolo rose very early on the Sunday morning, and walked all that day up the island, and came by seven at night—all pretty tired, and Misifolo most of all—to Tanugamanono.† We at Vailima knew nothing at all about

* A visiting party.

† Talolo was the Vailima cook; Sina, his wife; Tauilo, his mother; Mitaele and Sosimo, his brothers. Lafaele, who was married to Faauma, was a middle-aged Futuna Islander, and had spent many years of his life on a whale-ship, the captain of which had kidnapped him when a boy. Misifolo was one of the "housemaids." Iopu and Tali, man and wife, had long been in our service, but had left it after they had been married some time; but, according to Samoan ideas, they were none the less members of Tusitala's family, because, though they were no longer working for him, they still owed him allegiance. "Aunt Maggie" is Mr. Stevenson's mother; Palema, Mr. Graham Balfour.—[L. O.]

the marchings of the Saturday and Sunday, but Uncle Lloyd got his boys and things together and went to bed.

A little after five in the morning I woke and took the lantern, and went out of the front door and round the verandahs. There was never a spark of dawn in the east, only the stars looked a little pale; and I expected to find them all asleep in the workhouse. But no! the stove was roaring, and Talolo and Fono, who was to lead the party, were standing together talking by the stove, and one of Fono's young men was lying asleep on the sofa in the smoking-room, wrapped in his lava-lava. I had my breakfast at half-past five that morning, and the bell rang before six, when it was just the grey of dawn. But by seven the feast was spread —there was Iopu coming up, with Tali at his heels, and Misifolo bringing up the rear—and Talolo could go the malanga.

Off they set with two guns and three porters, and Fono and Lloyd and Palema, and Talolo himself with his best Sunday-go-to-meeting lava-lava rolled up under his arm, and a very sore foot; but much he cared —he was smiling from ear to ear, and would have gone to Siumu over red-hot coals. Off they set round the corner of the cook-house, and into the Bush beside the chicken-house, and so good-bye to them.

But you should see how Iopu has taken possession! "Never saw a place in such a state!" is written on his face. "In my time," says he, "we didn't let things go ragging along like this, and I'm going to show you fellows." The first thing he did was to apply for a bar of soap, and then he set to work washing everything (that had all been washed last Friday in the regular course). Then he had the grass cut all round the cook-house, and I tell you but he found scraps, and odds and ends, and grew more angry and indignant at each fresh discovery.

"If a white chief came up here and smelt this, how would you feel?" he asked your mother. "It is enough to breed a sickness!"

And I dare say you remember this was just what your mother had often said to herself; and did say the day she went out and cried on the kitchen steps in order to make Talolo ashamed. But Iopu gave it all out as little new discoveries of his own. The last thing was the cows, and I tell you he was solemn about the cows. They were all destroyed, he said, nobody knew how to milk except himself—where he is about right. Then came dinner and a delightful little surprise. Perhaps you remember that long ago I used not to eat mashed potatoes, but always had two or three boiled in a plate. This has not been done for months, because Talolo makes such admirable mashed potatoes that I have caved in. But here came dinner, mashed potatoes for your mother and the Tamaitai, and then boiled potatoes in a plate for me!

And there is the end of the Tale of the return of Iopu, up to date. What more there may be is in the lap of the gods, and, Sir, I am yours considerably,

UNCLE LOUIS.

TO AUSTIN STRONG

MY DEAR HOSKYNS,—I am kept away in a cupboard because everybody has the influenza; I never see anybody at all, and never do anything whatever except to put ink on paper up here in my room. So what can I find to write to you?—you, who are going to school, and getting up in the morning to go bathing, and having (it seems to me) rather a fine time of it in general?

You ask if we have seen Arick? Yes, your mother saw him at the head of a gang of boys, and looking fat, and sleek, and well-to-do. I have an idea that he misbehaved here because he was homesick for the other Black Boys, and didn't know how else to get back to them. Well, he has got them now, and I hope he likes it better than I should.

I read the other day something that I thought would

interest so great a sea-bather as yourself. You know that the fishes that we see, and catch, go only a certain way down into the sea. Below a certain depth there is no life at all. The water is as empty as the air is above a certain height. Even the shells of dead fishes that come down there are crushed into nothing by the huge weight of the water. Lower still, in the places where the sea is profoundly deep, it appears that life begins again. People fish up in dredging buckets loose rags and tatters of creatures that hang together all right down there with the great weight holding them in one, but come all to pieces as they are hauled up. Just what they look like, just what they do or feed upon, we shall never find out. Only that we have some flimsy fellow-creatures down in the very bottom of the deep seas, and cannot get them up except in tatters. It must be pretty dark where they live, and there are no plants or weeds, and no fish come down there, or drowned sailors either, from the upper parts, because these are all mashed to pieces by the great weight long before they get so far, or else come to a place where perhaps they float. But I dare say a cannon sometimes comes careering solemnly down, and circling about like a dead leaf or thistledown; and then the ragged fellows go and play about the cannon and tell themselves all kinds of stories about the fish higher up and their iron houses, and perhaps go inside and sleep, and perhaps dream of it all like their betters.

Of course you know a cannon down there would be quite light. Even in shallow water, where men go down with a diving-dress, they grow so light that they have to hang weights about their necks, and have their boots loaded with twenty pounds of lead—as I know to my sorrow. And with all this, and the helmet, which is heavy enough of itself to any one up here in the thin air, they are carried about like gossamers, and have to take every kind of care not to be upset and stood upon their heads. I went down once in the dress, and speak from experience. But if we could get down for a mo-

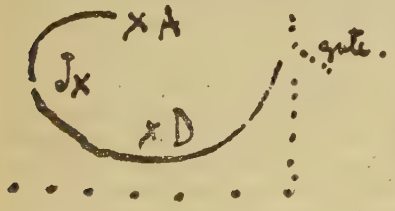
ment near where the fishes are, we should be in a tight place. Suppose the water not to crush us (which it would), we should pitch about in every kind of direction; every step we took would carry us as far as if we had seven-league boots; and we should keep flying head over heels, and top over bottom, like the liveliest clowns in the world.

Well, Sir, here is a great deal of words put down upon a piece of paper, and if you think that makes a letter, why, very well! And if you don't I can't help it. For I have nothing under heaven to tell you.

So, with kindest wishes to yourself, and Louie, and Aunt Nellie, believe me, your affectionate,

UNCLE LOUIS.

Now here is something worth telling you. This morning at six o'clock I saw all the horses together in the front paddock, and in a terrible ado about something. Presently I saw a man with two buckets on the march, and knew where the trouble was—the cow! The whole lot cleared to the gate but two—Donald, the big white horse, and my Jack. They stood solitary, one here, one there. I began to get interested, for I thought Jack was off his feed. In came the man with the bucket and all the ruck of curious horses at his tail. Right



round he went to where Donald stood (D) and poured out a feed, and the majestic Donald ate it, and the ruck of common horses followed the man. On he went to the second station, Jack's (J in the plan), and poured out a feed, and the fools of horses went in with him to the next place (A in the plan). And behold as the train swung round, the last of them came curiously too near Jack; and Jack left his feed and rushed upon this fool with a kind of outcry, and the fool fled, and Jack re-

turned to his feed; and he and Donald ate theirs with glory, while the others were still circling round for fresh feeds.

Glory be to the name of Donald and to the name of Jack, for they had found out where the foods were poured, and each took his station and waited there, Donald at the first of the course for his, Jack at the second station, while all the impotent fools ran round and round after the man with his buckets!

R. L. S.

To Austin Strong

Vailima.

My dear Austin,—Now when the overseer is away* I think it my duty to report to him anything serious that goes on on the plantation.

Early the other afternoon we heard that Sina's foot was very bad, and soon after that we could have heard her cries as far away as the front balcony. I think Sina rather enjoys being ill, and makes as much of it as she possibly can; but all the same it was painful to hear the cries; and there is no doubt she was at least very uncomfortable. I went up twice to the little room behind the stable, and found her lying on the floor, with Tali and Faauma and Talolo all holding on different bits of her. I gave her an opiate; but whenever she was about to go to sleep one of these silly people would be shaking her, or talking in her ear, and then she would begin to kick about again and scream.

Palema and Aunt Maggie took horse and went down to Apia after the doctor. Right on their heels off went Mitaele on Musu to fetch Tauilo, Talolo's mother. So

* While Austin was in Vailima many little duties about the plantation fell to his share, so that he was often called the "overseer"; and, small as he was, he sometimes took charge of a couple of big men, and went into town with the pack-horses. It was not all play, either; for he had to see that the barrels and boxes did not chafe the horses' backs, and that they were not allowed to come home too fast up the steep road.—[L. O.]

here was all the island in a bustle over Sina's foot. No doctor came, but he told us what to put on. When I went up at night to the little room, I found Tauilo there, and the whole plantation boxed into the place like little birds in a nest. They were sitting on the bed, they were sitting on the table, the floor was full of them, and the place as close as the engine-room of a steamer. In the middle lay Sina, about three parts asleep with opium; two able-bodied work boys were pulling at her arms, and whenever she closed her eyes calling her by name, and talking in her ear.

I really didn't know what would become of the girl before morning. Whether or not she had been very ill before, this was the way to make her so, and when one of the work boys woke her up again, I spoke to him very sharply, and told Tauilo she must put a stop to it.

Now I suppose this was what put it into Tauilo's head to do what she did next. You remember Tauilo, and what a fine, tall, strong Madame La Farge sort of person she is? And you know how much afraid the natives are of the evil spirits in the wood, and how they think all sickness comes from them? Up stood Tauilo, and addressed the spirit in Sina's foot, and scolded it, and the spirit answered and promised to be a good boy and go away. I do not feel so much afraid of the demons after this. It was Faauma told me about it. I was going out into the pantry after soda-water, and found her with a lantern drawing water from the tank. "Bad spirit he go away," she told me.

"That's first rate," said I. "Do you know what the name of that spirit was? His name was *tautala* [talking]."

"O, no!" she said; "his name is *Tu*."

You might have knocked me down with a straw. "How on earth do you know that?" I asked.

"Hear him tell Tauilo," she said.

As soon as I heard that, I began to suspect Mrs. Tauilo was a little bit of a ventriloquist; and imitating as well as I could the sort of voice they make, asked

her if the bad spirit did not talk like that. Faauma was very much surprised, and told me that was just his voice.

Well, that was a very good business for the evening. The people all went away because the demon was gone away, and the circus was over, and Sina was allowed to sleep. But the trouble came after. There had been an evil spirit in that room and his name was Tu. No one could say when he might come back again; they all voted it was *Tu* much; and now Talolo and Sina have had to be lodged in the Soldier Room.* As for the little room by the stable, there it stands empty; it is too small to play soldiers in, and I do not see what we can do with it, except to have a nice brass name-plate engraved in Sydney, or in "Frisco," and stuck upon the door of it—*Mr. Tu.*

So you see that ventriloquism has its bad side as well as its good sides; and I don't know that I want any more ventriloquists on this plantation. We shall have *Tu* in the cook-house next, and then *Tu* in Lafaele's, and *Tu* in the workmen's cottage; and the end of it all will be that we shall have to take the Tamaitai's room for the kitchen and my room for the boy's sleeping-house, and we shall all have to go out and camp under umbrellas.

Well, where you are there may be school-masters, but there is no such thing as *Mr. Tu!*

Now, it's all very well that these big people should be frightened out of their wits by an old wife talking with her mouth shut; that is one of the things we happen to know about. All the old women in the world might talk with their mouths shut, and not frighten you or me, but there are plenty of other things that frighten us badly. And if we only knew about them, perhaps we should find them no more worthy to be feared than an old woman talking with her mouth shut.

*A room set apart to serve as the theatre for an elaborate war-game, which was one of Mr. Stevenson's favourite recreations.

And the names of some of these things are Death, and Pain, and Sorrow.

UNCLE LOUIS.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

Saturday, 24th (?) June [1893]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—Yesterday morning, after a day of absolute temperance, I awoke to the worst headache I had had yet. Accordingly, temperance was said farewell to, quinine instituted, and I believe my pains are soon to be over. We wait, with a kind of sighing impatience, for war to be declared, or to blow finally off, living in the meanwhile in a kind of children's hour of firelight and shadow and preposterous tales; the king seen at night galloping up our road upon unknown errands and covering his face as he passes our cook; Mataafa daily surrounded (when he awakes) with fresh "white man's boxes" (query ammunition?) and professing to be quite ignorant of where they come from; marches of bodies of men across the island; concealment of ditto in the bush; the coming on and off of different chiefs; and such a mass of ravelment and ragtag as the devil himself could not unwind.

Wednesday, 28th June.—Yesterday it rained with but little intermission, but I was jealous of news. Graham and I got into the saddle about 1 o'clock and off down to town. In town, there was nothing but rumours going; in the night drums had been beat, the men had run to arms on Mulinuu from as far as Vaiala, and the alarm proved false. There were no signs of any gathering in Apia proper, and the Secretary of State had no news to give. I believed him, too, for we are brither Scots. Then the temptation came upon me strong to go on to the ford and see the Mataafa villages, where we heard there was more afoot. Off we rode. When we came to Vaimusu, the houses were very full of men, but all seemingly unarmed. Immediately beyond is that

river over which we passed in our scamper with Lady Jersey; it was all solitary. Three hundred yards beyond is a second ford; and there—I came face to face with war. Under the trees on the further bank sat a picket of seven men with Winchesters; their faces bright, their eyes ardent. As we came up, they did not speak or move; only their eyes followed us. The horses drank, and we passed the ford. "Talofa!" I said, and the commandant of the picket said "Talofa"; and then, when we were almost by, remembered himself and asked where we were going. "To Faamuiná," I said, and we rode on. Every house by the wayside was crowded with armed men. There was the European house of a Chinaman on the right hand side: a flag of truce flying over the gate—indeed we saw three of these in what little way we penetrated into Mataafa's lines —all the foreigners trying to protect their goods; and the Chinaman's verandah overflowed with men and girls and Winchesters. By the way we met a party of about ten or a dozen marching with their guns and cartridge-belts, and the cheerful alacrity and brightness of their looks set my head turning with envy and sympathy. Arrived at Vaiusu, the houses about the *malae* (village green) were thronged with men, all armed. On the outside of the council-house (which was all full within) there stood an orator; he had his back turned to his audience, and seemed to address the world at large; all the time we were there his strong voice continued unabated, and I heard snatches of political wisdom rising and falling.

The house of Faamuiná stands on a knoll in the *malae*. Thither we mounted, and a boy ran out and took our horses, and we went in. Faamuiná was there himself, his wife Pelepa, three other chiefs, and some attendants; and here again was this exulting spectacle as of people on their marriage day. Faamuiná (when I last saw him) was an elderly, limping gentleman, with much of the debility of age; it was a bright-eyed boy that greeted me; the lady was no less excited; all

had cartridge-belts. We stayed but a little while to smoke a selui; I would not have kava made, as I thought my escapade was already dangerous (perhaps even blameworthy) enough. On the way back, we were much greeted, and on coming to the ford, the commandant came and asked me if there were many on the other side. "Very many," said I; not that I knew, but I would not lead them on the ice. "That is well!" said he, and the little picket laughed aloud as we splashed into the river. We returned to Apia, through Apia, and out to windward as far as Vaiala, where the word went that the men of the Vaimauga had assembled. We met two boys carrying pigs, and saw six young men busy cooking in a cook-house; but no sign of an assembly; no arms, no blackened faces. (I forgot! As we turned to leave Faamuiná's, there ran forward a man with his face blackened, and the back of his lava-lava girded up so as to show his tattooed hips naked; he leaped before us, cut a wonderful caper, and flung his knife high in the air, and caught it. It was strangely savage and fantastic and high-spirited. I have seen a child doing the same antics long before in a dance, so that it is plainly an *accepted solemnity*. I should say that for weeks the children have been playing with spears.) Up by the plantation I took a short cut, which shall never be repeated, through grass and weeds over the horses' heads and among rolling stones; I thought we should have left a horse there, but fortune favoured us. So home, a little before six, in a dashing squall of rain, to a bowl of kava and dinner. But the impression on our minds was extraordinary; the sight of that picket at the ford, and those ardent, happy faces whirls in my head; the old aboriginal awoke in both of us and knickered like a stallion.

It is dreadful to think that I must sit apart here and do nothing; I do not know if I can stand it out. But you see, I may be of use to these poor people, if I keep quiet, and if I threw myself in, I should have a bad job of it to save myself. There; I have written this to you;

and it is still but 7.30 in the day, and the sun only about one hour up; can I go back to my old grandpapa, and men sitting with Winchesters in my mind's eye? No; war is a huge *entraînement;* there is no other temptatation to be compared to it, not one. We were all wet, we had been about five hours in the saddle, mostly riding hard; and we came home like schoolboys, with such a lightness of spirits, and I am sure such a brightness of eye, as you could have lit a candle at!

Do you appreciate the height and depth of my temptation? that I have about nine miles to ride, and I can become a general officer? and to-night I might seize Mulinuu and have the C. J. under arrest? And yet I stay here! It seems incredible, so huge is the empire of prudence and the second thought.

Thursday, 29th.—I had two priests to luncheon yesterday: the Bishop and Père Rémy. They were very pleasant, and quite clean too, which has been known sometimes not to be—even with bishops. Monseigneur is not unimposing; with his white beard and his violet girdle he looks splendidly episcopal, and when our three waiting lads came up one after another and kneeled before him in the big hall, and kissed his ring, it did me good for a piece of pageantry. Rémy is very engaging; he is a little, nervous, eager man, like a governess, and brimful of laughter and small jokes. So is the bishop indeed, and our luncheon party went off merrily—far more merrily than many a German spread, though with much less liquor. One trait was delicious. With a complete ignorance of the Protestant that I would scarce have imagined, he related to us (as news) little stories from the gospels, and got the names all wrong! His comments were delicious, and to our ears a thought irreverent. *"Ah! il connaissait son monde, allez!" "Il était fin, notre Seigneur!"* etc.

Friday.—Down with Fanny and Belle, to lunch at the International. Heard there about the huge folly of the hour, all the Mulinuu ammunition having been

yesterday marched openly to vaults in Matafele; and this morning, on a cry of protest from the whites, openly and humiliatingly disinterred and marched back again. People spoke of it with a kind of shrill note that did not quite satisfy me. They seemed not quite well at ease. Luncheon over, we rode out on the Malie road. All was quiet in Vaiusu, and when we got to the second ford, alas! there was no picket—which was just what Belle had come to sketch. On through quite empty roads; the houses deserted, never a gun to be seen; and at last a drum and a penny whistle playing in Vaiusu, and a cricket match on the *malae!* Went up to Faamuiná's; he is a trifle uneasy, though he gives us kava. I cannot see what ails him, then it appears that he has an engagement with the Chief Justice at half-past two to sell a piece of land. Is this the reason why war has disappeared? We ride back, stopping to sketch here and there the fords, a flag of truce, etc. I ride on to Public Hall Committee and pass an hour with my committees very heavily. To the hotel to dinner, then to the ball, and home by eleven, very tired. At the ball I heard some news of how the chief of Letonu said that I was the source of all this trouble, and should be punished, and my family as well. This, and the rudeness of the man at the ford of the Gasegase, looks but ill; I should have said that Faamuiná, as he approached the first ford, was spoken to by a girl, and immediately said good-bye and plunged into the bush; the girl had told him there was a war party out from Mulinuu; and a little farther on, as we stopped to sketch a flag of truce, the beating of drums and the sound of a bugle from that direction startled us. But we saw nothing, and I believe Mulinuu is (at least at present) incapable of any act of offence. One good job, these threats to my home and family take away all my childish temptation to go out and fight. Our force must be here, to protect ourselves. I see panic rising among the whites; I hear the shrill note of it in their voices, and they talk already about a refuge on the

war ships. There are two here, both German; and the *Orlando* is expected presently.

Sunday, 9th July.—Well, the war has at last begun. For four or five days, Apia has been filled by these poor children with their faces blacked, and the red handkerchief about their brows, that makes the Malietoa uniform, and the boats have been coming in from the windward, some of them 50 strong, with a drum and a bugle on board—the bugle always ill-played—and a sort of jester leaping and capering on the sparred nose of the boat, and the whole crew uttering from time to time a kind of menacing ululation. Friday they marched out to the bush, and yesterday morning we heard that some had returned to their houses for the night, as they found it "so uncomfortable." After dinner a messenger came up to me with a note, that the wounded were arriving at the Mission House. Fanny, Lloyd, and I saddled and rode off with a lantern; it was a fine starry night, though pretty cold. We left the lantern at Tanugamanono, and then down in the star-light. I found Apia, and myself, in a strange state of flusteration; my own excitement was gloomy (I may say), truculent; others appeared imbecile; some sullen. The best place in the whole town was the hospital. A longish frame house it was, with a big table in the middle for operations, and ten Samoans, each with an average of four sympathisers, stretched along the walls. Clarke was there, steady as a die; Miss Large, little spectacled angel, showed herself a real trump; the nice, clean, German orderlies in their white uniforms looked and meant business. (I hear a fine story of Miss Large—a cast-iron teetotaller—going to the public-house for a bottle of brandy.)

The doctors were not there when I arrived; but presently it was observed that one of the men was going cold. He was a magnificent Samoan, very dark, with a noble aquiline countenance, like an Arab, I suppose, and was surrounded by seven people, fondling his limbs as he lay; he was shot through both lungs. And an

orderly was sent to the town for the (German naval) doctors, who were dining there. Meantime I found an errand of my own. Both Clarke and Miss Large expressed a wish to have the public hall, of which I am chairman, and I set off down town, and woke people out of their beds, and got a committee together, and (with a great deal of difficulty from one man, whom we finally overwhelmed) got the public hall for them. Bar the one man, the committee was splendid, and agreed in a moment to share the expense if the shareholders object. Back to the hospital about 11.30; found the German doctors there. Two men were going now, one that was shot in the bowels—he was dying rather hard, in a gloomy stupor of pain and laudanum, silent, with contorted face. The chief, shot through the lungs, was lying on one side, awaiting the last angel; his family held his hands and legs: they were all speechless, only one woman suddenly clasped his knee, and "keened" for the inside of five seconds, and fell silent again. Went home, and to bed about two A.M. What actually passed seems undiscoverable; but the Mataafas were surely driven back out of Vaitele; that is a blow to them, and the resistance was far greater than had been anticipated—which is a blow to the Laupepas. All seems to indicate a long and bloody war.

Frank's house in Mulinuu was likewise filled with wounded; many dead bodies were brought in; I hear with certainty of five, wrapped in mats; and a pastor goes to-morrow to the field to bring others. The Laupepas brought in eleven heads to Mulinuu, and to the great horror and consternation of the native mind, one proved to be a girl, and was identified as that of a Taupou—or Maid of the Village—from Savaii. I hear this morning, with great relief, that it has been returned to Malie, wrapped in the most costly silk handkerchiefs, and with an apologetic embassy. This could easily happen. The girl was of course attending on her father with ammunition, and got shot; her hair was cut short to make her father's war headdress—even as

our own Sina's is at this moment; and the decollator was probably, in his red flurry of fight, wholly unconscious of her sex. I am sorry for him in the future; he must make up his mind to many bitter jests—perhaps to vengeance. But what an end to one chosen for her beauty and, in the time of peace, watched over by trusty crones and hunchbacks!

Evening.—Can I write or not? I played lawn tennis in the morning, and after lunch down with Graham to Apia. Ulu, he that was shot in the lungs, still lives; he that was shot in the bowels is gone to his fathers, poor, fierce child! I was able to be of some very small help, and in the way of helping myself to information, to prove myself a mere gazer at meteors. But there seems no doubt the Mataafas for the time are scattered; the most of our friends are involved in this disaster, and Mataafa himself—who might have swept the islands a few months ago—for him to fall so poorly, doubles my regret. They say the Taupou had a gun and fired; probably an excuse manufactured *ex post facto.* I go down to-morrow at 12, to stay the afternoon, and help Miss Large. In the hospital to-day, when I first entered it, there were no attendants; only the wounded and their friends, all equally sleeping and their heads poised upon the wooden pillows. There is a pretty enough boy there, slightly wounded, whose fate is to be envied: two girls, and one of the most beautiful, with beaming eyes, tend him and sleep upon his pillow. In the other corner, another young man, very patient and brave, lies wholly deserted. Yet he seems to me far the better of the two; but not so pretty! Heavens, what a difference that makes; in our not very well proportioned bodies and our finely hideous faces, the 1-32nd—rather the 1-64th—this way or that! Sixteen heads in all at Mulinuu. I am so stiff I can scarce move without a howl.

Monday, 10th.—Some news that Mataafa is gone to Savaii by way of Manono: this may mean a great deal more warfaring, and no great issue. (When Sosimo

came in this morning with my breakfast he had to lift me up. It is no joke to play lawn tennis after carrying your right arm in a sling so many years.) What a hard, unjust business this is! On the 28th, if Mataafa had moved, he could have still swept Mulinuu. He waited, and I fear he is now only the stick of a rocket.

Wednesday, 12th.—No more political news; but many rumours. The government troops are off to Manono; no word of Mataafa. O, there is a passage in my mother's letter which puzzles me as to a date. Is it next Christmas you are coming? or the Christmas after? This is most important, and must be understood at once. If it is next Christmas, I could not go to Ceylon, for lack of gold, and you would have to adopt one of the following alternatives: 1st, either come straight on here and pass a month with us; 'tis the rainy season, but we have often lovely weather. Or (2nd) come to Hawaii and I will meet you there. Hawaii is only a week's sail from S. Francisco, making only about sixteen days on the heaving ocean; and the steamers run once a fortnight, so that you could turn round; and you could thus pass a day or two in the States—a fortnight even—and still see me. But I have sworn to take no further excursions till I have money saved to pay for them; and to go to Ceylon and back would be torture unless I had a lot. You must answer this at once, please; so that I may know what to do. We would dearly like you to come on here. I'll tell you how it can be done: I can come up and meet you at Hawaii, and if you had at all got over your sea-sickness, I could just come on board and we could return together to Samoa, and you could have a month of our life here, which I believe you could not help liking. Our horses are the devil, of course, miserable screws, and some of them a little vicious. I had a dreadful fright—the passage in my mother's letter is recrossed and I see it says the end of /94: so much the better then; but I would like to submit to you my alternative plan. I could meet you at Hawaii, and reconduct you

to Hawaii, so that we could have a full six weeks together and I believe a little over, and you would see this place of mine, and have a sniff of native life, native foods, native houses—and perhaps be in time to see the German flag raised, who knows?—and we could generally yarn for all we were worth. I should like you to see Vailima; and I should be curious to know how the climate affected you. It is quite hit or miss; it suits me, it suits Graham, it suits all our family; others it does not suit at all. It is either gold or poison. I rise at six, the rest at seven; lunch is at 12; at five we go to lawn tennis till dinner at six; and to roost early.

A man brought in a head to Mulinuu in great glory; they washed the black paint off, and behold! it was his brother. When I last heard he was sitting in his house, with the head upon his lap and weeping. Barbarous war is an ugly business: but I believe the civilised is fully uglier; but Lord! what fun!

I should say we now have definite news that there are *three* women's heads; it was difficult to get it out of the natives, who are all ashamed, and the women all in terror of reprisals. Nothing has been done to punish or disgrace these hateful innovators. It was a false report that the head had been returned.

Thursday, 13*th.*—Mataafa driven away from Savaii. I cannot write about this, and do not know what should be the end of it.

Monday, 17*th.*—Haggard and Ahrens (a German clerk) to lunch yesterday. There is no real certain news yet: I must say, no man could *swear* to any result; but the sky looks horribly black for Mataafa and so many of our friends along with him. The thing has an abominable, a beastly, nightmare interest. But it's wonderful generally how little one cares about the wounded; hospital sights, etc.; things that used to murder me. I was far more struck with the excellent way in which things were managed; as if it had been a peep-show; I held some of the things at an operation, and did not care a dump.

Tuesday, 18*th.*—Sunday came the *Katoomba,* Captain Bickford, C.M.G. Yesterday, Graham and I went down to call, and find he has orders to suppress Mataafa at once, and has to go down to-day before daybreak to Manono. He is a very capable, energetic man; if he had only come ten days ago, all this would have gone by; but now the questions are thick and difficult. (1) Will Mataafa surrender? (2) Will his people allow themselves to be disarmed? (3) What will happen to them if they do? (4) What will any of them believe after former deceptions? The three consuls were scampering on horseback to Leulumoega to the king; no Cusack-Smith, without whose accession I could not send a letter to Mataafa. I rode up here, wrote my letter in the sweat of the concordance and with the able-bodied help of Lloyd—and dined. Then down in continual showers and pitchy darkness, and to Cusack-Smith's; not returned. Back to the inn for my horse, and to C.-S.'s, when I find him just returned and he accepts my letter. Thence home, by 12.30, jolly tired and wet. And to-day have been in a crispation of energy and ill-temper, raking my wretched mail together. It is a hateful business, waiting for the news; it may come to a fearful massacre yet.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To James S. Stevenson

This is addressed to a very remote cousin, in quest of information about the origins of the family.

Vailima, Samoa, June 19*th,* 1893

Dear Mr. Stevenson,—I am reminded by coming across some record of relations between my grandfather, Robert Stevenson, C.E., Edinburgh, and Robert Stevenson, Esq., Secretary to the Royal Exchange, Glasgow, and I presume a son of Hugh Stevenson who died in Tobago 16th April, 1774, that I have not yet consulted my cousins in Glasgow.

I am engaged in writing a Life of my grandfather,

my uncle Alan, and my father, Thomas, and I find almost inconceivable difficulty in placing and understanding their (and my) descent.

Might I ask if you have any material to go upon? The smallest notes would be like found gold to me; and an old letter invaluable.

I have not got beyond James Stevenson and Jean Keir his spouse, to whom Robert the First (?) was born in 1675. Could you get me further back? Have you any old notes of the trouble in the West Indian business which took Hugh and Alan to their deaths? How had they acquired so considerable a business at an age so early? You see how the queries pour from me; but I will ask nothing more in words. Suffice it to say that any information, however insignificant, as to our common forbears, will be very gratefully received. In case you should have any original documents, it would be better to have copies sent to me in this outlandish place, for the expense of which I will account to you as soon as you let me know the amount, and it will be wise to register your letter.—Believe me, in the old, honoured Scottish phrase, your affectionate cousin,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Henry James

Apia, July, 1893

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES,—Yes. *Les Trophées* is, on the whole, a book.* It is excellent; but is it a life's work? I always suspect *you* of a volume of sonnets up your sleeve; when is it coming down? I am in one of my moods of wholesale impatience with all fiction and all verging on it, reading instead, with rapture, *Fountainhall's Decisions.* You never read it: well, it hasn't much form, and is inexpressibly dreary, I should suppose, to others—and even to me for pages. It's like walking in a mine underground, and with a damned

* Volume of Sonnets by José Maria de Hérédia.

bad lantern, and picking out pieces of ore. This, and war, will be my excuse for not having read your (doubtless) charming work of fiction. The revolving year will bring me round to it; and I know, when fiction shall begin to feel a little *solid* to me again, that I shall love it, because it's James. Do you know, when I am in this mood, I would rather try to read a bad book? It's not so disappointing, anyway. And *Fountainhall* is prime, two big folio volumes, and all dreary, and all true, and all as terse as an obituary; and about one interesting fact on an average in twenty pages, and ten of them unintelligible for technicalities. There's literature, if you like! It feeds; it falls about you genuine like rain. Rain: nobody has done justice to rain in literature yet: surely a subject for a Scot. But then you can't do rain in that ledger-book style that I am trying for—or between a ledger-book and an old ballad. How to get over, how to escape from, the besotting *particularity* of fiction. "Roland approached the house; it had green doors and window blinds; and there was a scraper on the upper step." To hell with Roland and the scraper! Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To A. Conan Doyle

Vailima, July 12, 1893

My dear Dr. Conan Doyle,—The *White Company* has not yet turned up; but when it does—which I suppose will be next mail—you shall hear news of me. I have a great talent for compliment, accompanied by a hateful, even a diabolic frankness.

Delighted to hear I have a chance of seeing you and Mrs. Doyle; Mrs. Stevenson bids me say (what is too true) that our rations are often spare. Are you Great Eaters? Please reply.

As to ways and means, here is what you will have to do. Leave San Francisco by the down mail, get off at Samoa, and twelve days or a fortnight later, you can

continue your journey to Auckland per Upolu, which will give you a look at Tanga and possibly Fiji by the way. Make this a *first part of your plans.* A fortnight, even of Vailima diet, could kill nobody.

We are in the midst of war here; rather a nasty business, with the head-taking; and there seems signs of other trouble. But I believe you need make no change in your design to visit us. All should be well over; and if it were not, why! you need not leave the steamer.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To CHARLES BAXTER

19*th July*, '93

. . . WE are in the thick of war—see *Illustrated London News*—we have only two outside boys left to us. Nothing is doing, and *per contra* little paying. . . . My life here is dear; but I can live within my income for a time at least—so long as my prices keep up—and it seems a clear duty to waste none of it on gadding about. . . . My life of my family fills up intervals, and should be an excellent book when it is done, but big, damnably big.

My dear old man, I perceive by a thousand signs that we grow old, and are soon to pass away; I hope with dignity; if not, with courage at least. I am myself very ready; or would be—will be—when I have made a little money for my folks. The blows that have fallen upon you are truly terrifying; I wish you strength to bear them. It is strange, I must seem to you to blaze in a Birmingham prosperity and happiness; and to myself I seem a failure. The truth is, I have never got over the last influenza yet, and am miserably out of heart and out of kilter. Lungs pretty right, stomach nowhere, spirits a good deal over-shadowed; but we'll come through it yet, and cock our bonnets. (I confess

with sorrow that I am not yet quite sure about the *intellects;* but I hope it is only one of my usual periods of non-work. They are more unbearable now, because I cannot rest. *No rest but the grave for Sir Walter!* O the words ring in a man's head.)

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

[*Vailima*] *August,* 1893

My dear Colvin,—Quite impossible to write. Your letter is due to-day; a nasty, rain-like morning with huge blue clouds, and a huge indigo shadow on the sea, and my lamp still burning at near 7. Let me humbly give you news. Fanny seems on the whole the most, or the only, powerful member of the family; for some days she has been the Flower of the Flock. Belle is begging for quinine. Lloyd and Graham have both been down with "belly belong him" (Black Boy speech). As for me, I have to lay aside my lawn tennis, having (as was to be expected) had a smart but eminently brief hemorrhage. I am also on the quinine flask. I have been re-casting the beginning of the *Hanging Judge* or *Weir of Hermiston;* then I have been cobbling on *My Grandfather,* whose last chapter (there are only to be four) is in the form of pieces of paper, a huge welter of inconsequence, and that glimmer of faith (or hope) which one learns at this trade, that somehow and some time, by perpetual staring and glowering and re-writing, order will emerge. It is indeed a queer hope; there is one piece for instance that I want in—I cannot put it one place for a good reason—I cannot put it another for a better—and every time I look at it, I turn sick and put the MS. away.

Well, your letter hasn't come, and a number of others are missing. It looks as if a mail-bag had gone on, so I'll blame nobody, and proceed to business.

It looks as if I was going to send you the first three

chapters of *My Grandfather*. . . . If they were set up, it would be that much anxiety off my mind. I have a strange feeling of responsibility, as if I had my ancestors' *souls* in my charge, and might miscarry with them.

There's a lot of work gone into it, and a lot more is needed. Still Chapter I. seems about right to me, and much of Chapter II. Chapter III. I know nothing of, as I told you. And Chapter IV. is at present all ends and beginnings; but it can be pulled together.

This is all I have been able to screw up to you for this month, and I may add that it is not only more than you deserve, but just about more than I was equal to. I have been and am entirely useless; just able to tinker at *My Grandfather*. The three chapters—perhaps also a little of the fourth—will come home to you next mail by the hand of my cousin Graham Balfour, a very nice fellow whom I recommend to you warmly—and whom I think you will like. This will give you time to consider my various and distracted schemes.

All our wars are over in the meantime, to begin again as soon as the war-ships leave. Adieu.

R. L. S.

To A. Conan Doyle

Vailima, August 23rd, 1893

My dear Dr. Conan Doyle,—I am reposing after a somewhat severe experience upon which I think it my duty to report to you. Immediately after dinner this evening it occurred to me to re-narrate to my native overseer Simelé your story of *The Engineer's Thumb*. And, sir, I have done it. It was necessary, I need hardly say, to go somewhat farther afield than you have done. To explain (for instance) what a railway is, what a steam hammer, what a coach and horse, what coining, what a criminal, and what the police. I pass over other and no less necessary explanations. But I

did actually succeed; and if you could have seen the drawn, anxious features, and the bright, feverish eyes of Simelé, you would have (for the moment at least) tasted glory. You might perhaps think that, were you to come to Samoa, you might be introduced as the Author of *The Engineer's Thumb*. Disabuse yourself. They do not know what it is to make up a story. *The Engineer's Thumb* (God forgive me) was narrated as a piece of actual and factual history. Nay, and more, I who write to you have had the indiscretion to perpetrate a trifling piece of fiction entitled *The Bottle Imp*. Parties who come up to visit my unpretentious mansion, after having admired the ceilings by Vanderputty and the tapestry by Gobbling, manifest towards the end a certain uneasiness which proves them to be fellows of an infinite delicacy. They may be seen to shrug a brown shoulder, to roll up a speaking eye, and at last the secret bursts from them: "Where is the bottle?" Alas, my friends (I feel tempted to say), you will find it by the Engineer's Thumb! Talofa soifua.

Oa'u, o lau no moni, O Tusitala.

More commonly known as R. L. STEVENSON.

Have read the *Refugees;* Condé and old P. Murat very good; Louis XIV. and Louvois with the letter bag very rich. You have reached a trifle wide perhaps; too *many* celebrities? Though I was delighted to re-encounter my old friend Du Chaylu. Old Murat is perhaps your high-water mark; 'tis excellently human, cheerful and real. Do it again. Madame de Maintenon struck me as quite good. Have you any document for the decapitation? It sounds steepish. The devil of all that first part is that you see old Dumas; yet your Louis XIV. is *distinctly good.* I am much interested with this book, which fulfils a good deal, and promises more. Question, How far a Historical Novel should be wholly episodic? I incline to that view, with trembling. I shake hands with you on old Murat.

R. L. S.

To Augustus St. Gaudens

Mr. St. Gaudens's large medallion portrait in bronze, executed from sittings given in 1887, had at last found its way to Apia but not yet to Vailima.

Vailima, September, 1893

My dear St. Gaudens,—I had determined not to write to you till I had seen the medallion, but it looks as if that might mean the Greek Kalends or the day after to-morrow. Reassure yourself, your part is done, it is ours that halts—the consideration of conveyance over our sweet little road on boys' backs, for we cannot very well apply the horses to this work; there is only one; you cannot put it in a panier; to put it on the horse's back we have not the heart. Beneath the beauty of R. L. S., to say nothing of his verses which the publishers find heavy enough, and the genius of the godlike sculptor, the spine would snap and the well-knit limbs of the (ahem) cart-horse would be loosed by death. So you are to conceive me, sitting in my house, dubitative, and the medallion chuckling in the warehouse of the German firm, for some days longer; and hear me meanwhile on the golden letters.

Alas! they are all my fancy painted, but the price is prohibitive. I cannot do it. It is another day-dream burst. Another gable of Abbotsford has gone down, fortunately before it was builded, so there's nobody injured—except me. I had a strong conviction that I was a great hand at writing inscriptions, and meant to exhibit and test my genius on the walls of my house; and now I see I can't. It is generally thus. The Battle of the Golden Letters will never be delivered. On making preparation to open the campaign, the King found himself face to face with invincible difficulties, in which the rapacity of a mercenary soldiery and the complaints of an impoverished treasury played an equal part.—Ever yours,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

I enclose a bill for the medallion; have been trying to find your letter, quite in vain, and therefore must request you to pay for the bronze letters yourself and let me know the damage.

R. L. S.

To James S. Stevenson

Vailima Plantation, Island of Upolu, Samoa, Sept. 4th, 1893

My dear Cousin,—I thank you cordially for your kinsmanlike reply to my appeal. Already the notes from the family Bible have spared me one blunder, which I had from some notes in my grandfather's own hand; and now, like the daughters of the horseleech, my voice is raised again to put you to more trouble. "Nether Carsewell, Neilston," I read. My knowledge of Scotland is fairly wide, but it does not include Neilston.

However, I find by the (original) Statistical Account, it is a parish in Renfrew. Do you know anything of it? Have you identified Nether Carsewell? Have the Neilston parish registers been searched? I see whole vistas of questions arising, and here am I in Samoa!

I shall write by this mail to my lawyer to have the records searched, and to my mother to go and inquire in the parish itself. But perhaps you may have some further information, and if so, I should be glad of it. If you have not, pray do not trouble to answer. As to your father's blunder of "Stevenson of Cauldwell," it is now explained: *Carse*well may have been confounded with *Cauld*well: and it seems likely our man may have been a tenant or retainer of Mure of Cauldwell, a very ancient and honourable family, who seems to have been at least a neighbouring laird to the parish of Neilston. I was just about to close this, when I observed again your obliging offer of service, and I take you promptly at your word.

Do you think that you or your son could find a day to

visit Neilston and try to identify Nether Carsewell, find what size of a farm it is, to whom it belonged, etc.? I shall be very much obliged. I am pleased indeed to learn some of my books have given pleasure to your family; and with all good wishes, I remain, your affectionate cousin,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

The registers I shall have seen to, through my lawyer

To GEORGE MEREDITH

Vailima Plantation, Upolu, Samoa,
Sept. 5th, 1893

MY DEAR MEREDITH,—I have again and again taken up the pen to write to you, and many beginnings have gone into the waste paper basket (I have one now—for the second time in my life—and feel a big man on the strength of it). And no doubt it requires some decision to break so long a silence. My health is vastly restored, and I am now living patriarchally in this place six hundred feet above the sea on the shoulder of a mountain of 1500. Behind me, the unbroken bush slopes up the backbone of the island (3 to 4,000) without a house, with no inhabitant save a few runaway black boys, wild pigs and cattle, and wild doves and flying foxes, and many parti-coloured birds, and many black, and many white: a very eerie, dim, strange place and hard to travel. I am the head of a household of five whites and of twelve Samoans, to all of whom I am the chief and father: my cook comes to me and asks leave to marry—and his mother, a fine old chief woman, who has never lived here, does the same. You may be sure I granted the petition. It is a life of great interest, complicated by the Tower of Babel, that old enemy. And I have all the time on my hands for literary work.

My house is a great place; we have a hall fifty feet

long, with a great redwood stair ascending from it, where we dine in state—myself usually dressed in a singlet and a pair of trousers—and attended on by servants in a single garment, a kind of kilt—also flowers and leaves—and their hair often powdered with lime. The European who came upon it suddenly would think it was a dream. We have prayers on Sunday night—I am a perfect pariah in the island not to have them oftener, but the spirit is unwilling and the flesh proud, and I cannot go it more. It is strange to see the long line of the brown folk crouched along the wall with lanterns at intervals before them in the big shadowy hall, with an oak cabinet at one end of it, and a group of Rodin's (which native taste regards as *prodigieusement leste*) presiding over all from the top —and to hear the long rambling Samoan hymn rolling up (God bless me, what style! But I am off business to-day, and this is not meant to be literature).

I have asked Colvin to send you a copy of *Catriona,* which I am sometimes tempted to think is about my best work. I hear word occasionally of *The Amazing Marriage.* It will be a brave day for me when I get hold of it. Gower Woodseer is now an ancient, lean, grim, exiled Scot, living and labouring as for a wager in the tropics; still active, still with lots of fire in him, but the youth—ah, the youth where is it? For years after I came here, the critics (those genial gentlemen) used to deplore the relaxation of my fibre and the idleness to which I had succumbed. I hear less of this now; the next thing is they will tell me I am writing myself out! and that my unconscientious conduct is bringing their grey hairs with sorrow to the dust. I do not know—I mean I do know one thing. For fourteen years I have not had a day's real health; I have wakened sick and gone to bed weary; and I have done my work unflinchingly. I have written in bed, and written out of it, written in hemorrhages, written in sickness, written torn by coughing, written when my head swam for weakness; and for so long, it seems

to me I have won my wager and recovered my glove. I am better now, have been rightly speaking since first I came to the Pacific; and still, few are the days when I am not in some physical distress. And the battle goes on—ill or well, is a trifle; so as it goes. I was made for a contest, and the Powers have so willed that my battlefield should be this dingy, inglorious one of the bed and the physic bottle. At least I have not failed, but I would have preferred a place of trumpetings and the open air over my head.

This is a devilish egotistical yarn. Will you try to imitate me in that if the spirit ever moves you to reply? And meantime be sure that away in the midst of the Pacific there is a house on a wooded island where the name of George Meredith is very dear, and his memory (since it must be no more) is continually honoured.—Ever your friend,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

Remember me to Mariette, if you please; and my wife sends her most kind remembrances to yourself.

R. L. S.

TO CHARLES BAXTER

Finished on the way to Honolulu for a health change which turned out unfortunate. With the help of Mr. J. H. Stevenson and other correspondents R. L. S. had now been able (regretfully giving up the possibility of a Macgregor lineage) to identify his forbears as having about 1670 been tenant farmers at Nether Carsewell in Renfrewshire. The German government at home had taken his *Footnote to History* much less kindly than his German neighbours on the spot, and the Tauchnitz edition had been confiscated and destroyed and its publisher fined.

[*Vailima, and S.S.* Mariposa, *September,* 1893]

MY DEAR CHARLES,—Here is a job for you. It appears that about 1665, or earlier, James Stevenson in / of Nether Carsewell, parish of Neilston, flourished. Will you kindly send an able-bodied reader to com-

pulse the parish registers of Neilston, if they exist or go back as far? Also could any trace be found through Nether Carsewell? I expect it to have belonged to Mure of Cauldwell. If this be so, might not the Cauldwell charter chest contain some references to their Stevenson tenantry? Perpend upon it. But clap me on the judicious, able-bodied reader on the spot. Can I really have found the tap-root of my illustrious ancestry at last? Souls of my fathers! What a giggle-iggle-orious moment! I have drawn on you for £400. Also I have written to Tauchnitz announcing I should bear one-half part of his fines and expenses, amounting to £62, 10s. The £400 includes £160 which I have laid out here in land. Vanu Manutagi—the vale of crying birds (the wild dove)—is now mine: it was Fanny's wish and she is to buy it from me when she has made that much money.

Will you please order for me through your bookseller the *Mabinogion* of Lady Charlotte Guest—if that be her name—and the original of Cook's voyages lately published? Also, I see announced a map of the Great North Road: you might see what it is like: if it is highly detailed, or has any posting information, I should like it.

This is being finished on board the *Mariposa* going north. I am making the run to Honolulu and back for health's sake. No inclination to write more.—As ever, R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

On a first reading of the incomplete MS. of *The Ebb-Tide*, without its concluding chapters, which are the strongest, dislike of the three detestable chief characters—or rather two detestable and one contemptible—had made me unjust to the imaginative force and vividness of the treatment.

[*Vailima*] 23*rd August*

My dear Colvin,—Your pleasing letter *re The Ebb-Tide*, to hand. I propose, if it be not too late, to

delete Lloyd's name. He has nothing to do with the last half. The first we wrote together, as the beginning of a long yarn. The second is entirely mine; and I think it rather unfair on the young man to couple his name with so infamous a work. Above all, as you had not read the two last chapters, which seem to me the most ugly and cynical of all.

You will see that I am not in a good humour; and I am not. It is not because of your letter, but because of the complicated miseries that surround me and that I choose to say nothing of. . . . Life is not all Beer and Skittles. The inherent tragedy of things works itself out from white to black and blacker, and the poor things of a day look ruefully on. Does it shake my cast-iron faith? I cannot say it does. I believe in an ultimate decency of things; ay, and if I woke in hell, should still believe it! But it is hard walking, and I can see my own share in the missteps, and can bow my head to the result, like an old, stern, unhappy devil of a Norseman, as my ultimate character is. . . .

Well, *il faut cultiver son jardin.* That last expression of poor, unhappy human wisdom I take to my heart and go to *St. Ives.*

24*th Aug.*—And did, and worked about 2 hours and got to sleep ultimately and " a' the clouds has blawn away." " Be sure we'll have some pleisand weather, When a' the clouds (storms?) has blawn (gone?) away." Verses that have a quite inexplicable attraction for me, and I believe had for Burns. They have no merit, but are somehow good. I am now in a most excellent humour.

I am deep in *St. Ives* which, I believe, will be the next novel done. But it is to be clearly understood that I promise nothing, and may throw in your face the very last thing you expect—or I expect. *St. Ives* will (to my mind) not be wholly bad. It is written in rather a funny style; a little stilted and left-handed; the style of St. Ives; also, to some extent,

the style of R. L. S. dictating *St. Ives* is unintellectual, and except as an adventure novel dull. But the adventures seem to me sound and pretty probable; and it is a love story. Speed his wings!

Sunday night.—De cœur un peu plus dispos, monsieur et cher confrère, je me remets à vous écrire. St. Ives is now in the 5th chapter copying; in the 14th chapter of the dictated draft. I do not believe I shall end by disliking it.

Monday.—Well, here goes again for the news. Fanny is *very well* indeed and in good spirits; I am in good spirits, but not *very* well; Lloyd is in good spirits and very well; Belle has a real good fever which has put her pipe out wholly. Graham goes back this mail. He takes with him three chapters of *The Family*, and is to go to you as soon as he can. He cannot be much the master of his movements, but you grip him when you can and get all you can from him, as he has lived about six months with us and he can tell you just what is true and what is not—and not the dreams of dear old Ross.* He is a good fellow, is he not?

Since you rather revise your views of *The Ebb-Tide*, I think Lloyd's name might stick, but I'll leave it to you. I'll tell you just how it stands. Up to the discovery of the champagne, the tale was all planned between us and drafted by Lloyd; from that moment he has had nothing to do with it except talking it over. For we changed our plan, gave up the projected Monte Cristo, and cut it down for a short story. My impression—(I beg your pardon—this is a local joke—a firm here had on its beer labels, "sole importers")—is that it will never be popular, but might make a little *succès de scandale*. However, I'm done with it now, and not sorry, and the crowd may rave and mumble its bones for what I care.

* Dr. Fairfax Ross, a distinguished physician of Sydney, and friend of the Stevenson family, who during a visit to England this summer had conveyed to me no very reassuring impression as to the healthfulness of the island life and climate.

Hole essential.* I am sorry about the maps; but I want 'em for next edition, so see and have proofs sent. You are quite right about the bottle and the great Huish, I must try to make it clear. No, I will not write a play for Irving nor for the devil. Can you not see that the work of *falsification* which a play demands is of all tasks the most ungrateful? And I have done it a long while—and nothing ever came of it.

Consider my new proposal, I mean Honolulu. You would get the Atlantic and the Rocky Mountains, would you not? for bracing. And so much less sea! And then you could actually see Vailima, which I *would* like you to, for it's beautiful and my home and tomb that is to be; though it's a wrench not to be planted in Scotland—that I never can deny—if I could only be buried in the hills, under the heather and a table tombstone like the martyrs, where the whaups and plovers are crying! Did you see a man who wrote the *Stickit Minister*,† and dedicated it to me, in words that brought the tears to my eyes every time I looked at them. "Where about the graves of the martyrs the whaups are crying. *His* heart remembers how." Ah, by God, it does! Singular that I should fulfil the Scots destiny throughout, and live a voluntary exile, and have my head filled with the blessed, beastly place all the time!

And now a word as regards the delusions of the dear Ross, who remembers, I believe, my letters and Fanny's when we were first installed, and were really hoeing a hard row. We have salad, beans, cabbages, tomatoes, asparagus, kohl-rabi, oranges, limes, barbadines, pineapples, Cape gooseberries—galore; pints of milk and cream; fresh meat five days a week. It is the rarest thing for any of us to touch a tin; and the

* W. Hole, R.S.A.: essential for the projected illustrations to *Kidnapped* and *Catriona*.

† Mr. S. R. Crockett. The words quoted from this gentleman's dedication were worked by Stevenson into a very moving and metrically original set of verses, addressed to him in acknowledgment (*Songs of Travel*, xlv.).

gnashing of teeth when it has to be done is dreadful—for no one who has not lived on them for six months knows what the Hatred of the Tin is. As for exposure, my weakness is certainly the reverse; I am sometimes a month without leaving the verandah—for my sins be it said! Doubtless, when I go about and, as the Doctor says, "expose myself to malaria," I am in far better health; and I would do so more too—for I do not mean to be silly—but the difficulties are great. However, you see how much the dear Doctor knows of my diet and habits! Malaria practically does not exist in these islands; it is a negligible quantity. What really bothers us a little is the mosquito affair—the so-called elephantiasis—ask Ross about it. A real romance of natural history, *quoi!*

Hi! stop! you say *The Ebb-Tide* is the "working out of an artistic problem of a kind." Well, I should just bet it was! You don't like Attwater. But look at my three rogues; they're all there, I'll go bail. Three types of the bad man, the weak man, and the strong man with a weakness, that are gone through and lived out.

Yes, of course I was sorry for Mataafa, but a good deal sorrier and angrier about the mismanagement of all the white officials. I cannot bear to write about that. Manono all destroyed, one house standing in Apolima, the women stripped, the prisoners beaten with whips—and the women's heads taken—all under white auspices. And for upshot and result of so much shame to the white powers—Tamasese already conspiring! as I knew and preached in vain must be the case! Well, well, it is no fun to meddle in politics.

I suppose you're right about Simon.* But it is Symon throughout in that blessed little volume my father bought for me in Inverness in the year of grace '81, I believe— the trial of James Stewart, with the Jacobite pamphlet and the dying speech appended—out of

*Simon Fraser, the Master of Lovat, in *Catriona:* the spelling of his name.

which the whole of *Davie* has already been begotten, and which I felt it a kind of loyalty to follow. I really ought to have it bound in velvet and gold, if I had any gratitude! and the best of the lark is, that the name of David Balfour is not anywhere within the bounds of it. A pretty curious instance of the genesis of a book. I am delighted at your good word for *David;* I believe the two together make up much the best of my work and perhaps of what is in me. I am not ashamed of them, at least. There is one hitch; instead of three hours between the two parts, I fear there have passed three years over *Davie's* character; but do not tell anybody; see if they can find it out for themselves; and no doubt his experiences in *Kidnapped* would go far to form him. I would like a copy to go to G. Meredith.

Wednesday.—Well, here is a new move. It is likely I may start with Graham next week and go to Honolulu to meet the other steamer and return: I do believe a fortnight at sea would do me good: yet I am not yet certain. The crowded *up*-steamer sticks in my throat.

Tuesday, 12*th Sept.*—Yesterday was perhaps the brightest in the annals of Vailima. I got leave from Captain Bickford to have the band of the *Katoomba* come up, and they came, fourteen of 'em, with drum, fife, cymbals, and bugles, blue jackets, white caps, and smiling faces. The house was all decorated with scented greenery above and below. We had not only our own nine out-door workers, but a contract party that we took on in charity to pay their war-fine; the band besides, as it came up the mountain, had collected a following of children by the way, and we had a picking of Samoan ladies to receive them. Chicken, ham, cake, and fruits were served out with coffee and lemonade, and all the afternoon we had rounds of claret negus flavoured with rum and limes. They played to us, they danced, they sang, they tumbled. Our boys came in the end of the verandah and gave

them a dance for a while. It was anxious work getting this stopped once it had begun, but I knew the band was going on a programme. Finally they gave three cheers for Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, shook hands, formed up and marched off playing—till a kicking horse in the paddock put their pipes out something of the suddenest—we thought the big drum was gone, but Simelé flew to the rescue. And so they wound away down the hill with ever another call of the bugle, leaving us extinct with fatigue, but perhaps the most contented hosts that ever watched the departure of successful guests. Simply impossible to tell how well these blue-jackets behaved; a most interesting lot of men; this education of boys for the navy is making a class, wholly apart—how shall I call them?—a kind of lower-class public school boy, well-mannered, fairly intelligent, sentimental as a sailor. What is more shall be writ on board ship if anywhere.

Please send *Catriona* to G. Meredith.

S.S. Mariposa.—To-morrow I reach Honolulu. Good-morning to your honour.

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

In the interval between the last letter and this, the writer had been down with a sharp and prolonged attack of fever at Honolulu, and Mrs. Stevenson had come from Samoa to nurse and take him home.

Waikiki, Honolulu, H. I., Oct. 23rd, 1893.

Dear Colvin,—My wife came up on the steamer and we go home together in 2 days. I am practically all right, only sleepy and tired easily, slept yesterday from 11 to 11.45, from 1 to 2.50, went to bed at 8 P.M., and with an hour's interval slept till 6 A.M., close upon 14 hours out of the 24. We sail to-morrow. I am anxious to get home, though this has been an interesting visit, and politics have been curious indeed to study. We go to P. P. C. on the Queen this morning; poor,

recluse lady, *abreuvée d'injures qu'elle est.* Had a rather annoying lunch on board the American man-of-war, with a member of the P. G. (provisional government); and a good deal of anti-royalist talk, which I had to sit out—not only for my host's sake, but my fellow guests. At last, I took the lead and changed the conversation.

R. L. S.

I am being busted here by party named Hutchinson.* Seems good.

[*Vailima—November.*]—Home again, and found all well, thank God. I am perfectly well again and ruddier than the cherry. Please note that 8000 is not bad for a volume of short stories; † *The Merry Men* did a good deal worse; the short story never sells. I hope *Catriona* will do; that is the important. The reviews seem mixed and perplexed, and one had the peculiar virtue to make me angry. I am in a fair way to expiscate my family history. Fanny and I had a lovely voyage down, with our new C. J. and the American Land Commissioner, and on the whole, and for these disgusting steamers, a pleasant ship's company. I cannot understand why you don't take to the Hawaii scheme. Do you understand? You cross the Atlantic in six days, and go from 'Frisco to Honolulu in seven. Thirteen days at sea *in all.*—I have no wish to publish *The Ebb-Tide* as a book, let it wait. It will look well in the portfolio. I would like a copy, of course, for that end; and to "look upon't again"—which I scarce dare.

[*Later.*]—This is disgraceful. I have done nothing: neither work nor letters. On the Me (May) day, we had a great triumph; our Protestant boys, instead of going with their own villages and families, went of their own accord in the Vailima uniform; Belle made

* The bust was exhibited in the New Gallery Summer Exhibition, 1895.

† *Island Nights' Entertainments.*

coats for them on purpose to complete the uniform, they having bought the stuff; and they were hailed as they marched in as the Tama-ona—the rich man's children. This is really a score; it means that Vailima is publicly taken as a family. Then we had my birthday feast a week late, owing to diarrhœa on the proper occasion. The feast was laid in the hall, and was a singular mass of food: 15 pigs, 100 lbs. beef, 100 lbs. pork, and the fruit and filigree in a proportion. We had sixty horse-posts driven in the gate paddock; how many guests I cannot guess, perhaps 150. They came between three and four and left about seven. Seumanu gave me one of his names; and when my name was called at the ava drinking, behold it was *Au mai taua ma manu-vao!* You would scarce recognise me, if you heard me thus referred to!

Two days after, we hired a carriage in Apia, Fanny, Belle, Lloyd and I, and drove in great style, with a native outrider, to the prison; a huge gift of ava and tobacco under the seats. The prison is now under the *pule* of an Austrian, Captain Wurmbrand, a soldier of fortune in Servia and Turkey, a charming, clever, kindly creature, who is adored "by *his* chiefs" (as he calls them) meaning *our* political prisoners. And we came into the yard, walled about with tinned iron, and drank ava with the prisoners and the captain. It may amuse you to hear how it is proper to drink ava. When the cup is handed you, you reach your arm out somewhat behind you, and slowly pour a libation, saying with somewhat the manner of prayer, "*Ia taumafa e le atua. Ua matagofie le fesila-faga nei.*" "Be it (high chief) partaken of by the God. How (high chief) beautiful to view is this (high chief) gathering." This pagan practice is very queer. I should say that the prison ava was of that not very welcome form that we elegantly call spit ava, but of course there was no escape, and it had to be drunk. Fanny and I rode home, and I moralised by the way. Could we ever stand Europe again? did she appreciate that

if we were in London, we should be *actually jostled* in the street? and there was nobody in the whole of Britain who knew how to take ava like a gentleman? 'Tis funny to be thus of two civilisations—or, if you like, of one civilisation and one barbarism. And, as usual, the barbarism is the more engaging.

Colvin, you have to come here and see us in our native / mortal spot. I just don't seem to be able to make up my mind to your not coming. By this time, you will have seen Graham, I hope, and he will be able to tell you something about us, and something reliable. I shall feel for the first time as if you knew a little about Samoa after that. Fanny seems to be in the right way now. I must say she is very, very well for her, and complains scarce at all. Yesterday, she went down *sola* (at least accompanied by a groom) to pay a visit; Belle, Lloyd, and I went a walk up the mountain road—the great public highway of the island, where you have to go single file. The object was to show Belle that gaudy valley of the Vaisigano which the road follows. If the road is to be made and opened, as our new Chief Justice promises, it will be one of the most beautiful roads in the world. But the point is this: I forgot I had been three months in civilisation, wearing shoes and stockings, and I tell you I suffered on my soft feet; coming home, down hill, on that stairway of loose stones, I could have cried. O yes, another story, I knew I had. The house boys had not been behaving well, so the other night I announced a *fono,* and Lloyd and I went into the boys' quarters, and I talked to them I suppose for half an hour, and Talolo translated; Lloyd was there principally to keep another ear on the interpreter; else there may be dreadful misconceptions. I rubbed all their ears, except two whom I particularly praised; and one man's wages I announced I had cut down by one half. Imagine his taking this smiling! Ever since, he has been specially attentive and greets me with a face of really heavenly

brightness. This is another good sign of their really and fairly accepting me as a chief. When I first came here, if I had fined a man a sixpence, he would have quit work that hour, and now I remove half his income, and he is glad to stay on—nay, does not seem to entertain the possibility of leaving. And this in the face of one particular difficulty—I mean our house in the bush, and no society, and no women society within decent reach.

I think I must give you our staff in a tabular form.

HOUSE.	KITCHEN.	OUTSIDE.
+ o *Sosimo,* provost and butler, and my valet.	+ o *Talolo,* provost and chief cook.	+ o *Henry Simelé,* provost and overseer of outside boys.
o *Misifolo,* who is Fanny and Belle's chamberlain.	+ o *Iopu,* second cook.	
	Tali, his wife, no wages.	*Lū.*
	Ti'a, Samoan cook.	
	Feiloa'i, his child, no wages, likewise no work—Belle's pet.	*Tasi Sele.*
		Maiele.
	+ o *Leuelu,* Fanny's boy, gardener, odd jobs.	*Pulu,* who is also our talking man and cries the ava.

IN APIA.

+ *Eliga,* washman and daily errand man.

The crosses mark out the really excellent boys. Ti'a is the man who has just been fined ½ his wages; he is a beautiful old man, the living image of "Fighting Gladiator," my favourite statue—but a dreadful humbug. I think we keep him on a little on account of his looks. This sign "o" marks those who have been two years or upwards in the family. I note all my old boys have the cross of honour except Misifolo; well, poor dog, he does his best, I suppose. You should see him scour. It is a remark that has often been made by visitors: you never see a Samoan run, ex-

cept at Vailima. Do you not suppose that makes me proud?

I am pleased to see what a success *The Wrecker* was, having already in little more than a year out-stripped *The Master of Ballantrae*.

About *David Balfour* in two volumes, do see that they make it a decent-looking book, and tell me, do you think a little historical appendix would be of service? Lang bleats for one, and I thought I might address it to him as a kind of open letter.

Dec. 4th.—No time after all. Good-bye.

R. L. S.

To J. Horne Stevenson

The following refers again to the introduction to the history of his own family which Stevenson was then preparing under the title *A Family of Engineers*. The correspondent was a specialist in genealogical research. I give this letter as a sample of many which passed between these two namesakes on this subject; omitting the remainder as too technical to be of general interest.

Vailima, Samoa, November 5th, 1893

My dear Stevenson,—A thousand thanks for your voluminous and delightful collections. Baxter—so soon as it is ready—will let you see a proof of my introduction, which is only set out as a sprat to catch Whales. And you will find I have a good deal of what you have, only mine in a perfectly desultory manner, as is necessary to an exile. My uncle's pedigree is wrong; there was never a Stevenson of Cauldwell, of course, but they were tenants of the Mures; the farm held by them is in my introduction: and I have already written to Charles Baxter to have a search made in the Register House. I hope he will have had the inspiration to put it under your surveillance. Your information as to your own family is intensely interesting, and I should not wonder but what you and we and old John Stevenson, "land la-

bourer in the parish of Dailly," came all of the same stock. Ayrshire—and probably Cunningham—seems to be the home of the race—our part of it. From the distribution of the name—which your collections have so much extended without essentially changing my knowledge of—we seem rather pointed to a British origin. What you say of the *Engineers* is fresh to me, and must be well thrashed out. This introduction of it will take a long while to walk about!—as perhaps I may be tempted to let it become long; after all, I am writing *this* for my own pleasure solely. Greetings to you and other Speculatives of our date, long bygone, alas!—Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—I have a different version of my grandfather's arms—or my father had if I could find it.

R. L. S.

To JOHN P———N

The next two numbers are in answer to letters of appreciation received from two small boys in England, whose mother, when the letters were first published in 1895, desired that they should remain nameless, and as to whose adult destinies the editor has no information.

Vailima, Samoa, December 3rd, 1893

DEAR JOHNNIE,—Well, I must say you seem to be a tremendous fellow! Before I was eight I used to write stories—or dictate them at least—and I had produced an excellent history of Moses, for which I got £1 from an uncle; but I had never gone the length of a play, so you have beaten me fairly on my own ground. I hope you may continue to do so, and thanking you heartily for your nice letter, I shall beg you to believe me yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Russell P———n

Vailima, Samoa, December 3rd, 1893

Dear Russell,—I have to thank you very much for your capital letter, which came to hand here in Samoa along with your mother's. When you "grow up and write stories like me," you will be able to understand that there is scarce anything more painful than for an author to hold a pen; he has to do it so much that his heart sickens and his fingers ache at the sight or touch of it; so that you will excuse me if I do not write much, but remain (with compliments and greetings from one Scot to another—though I was not born in Ceylon—you're ahead of me there).—Yours very truly,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

To Alison Cunningham

Vailima, December 5, 1893

My dearest Cummy,—This goes to you with a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. The Happy New Year anyway, for I think it should reach you about *Noor's Day.* I dare say it may be cold and frosty. Do you remember when you used to take me out of bed in the early morning, carry me to the back windows, show me the hills of Fife, and quote to me

> "A' the hills are covered wi' snaw,
> An' winter's noo come fairly"?

There is not much chance of that here! I wonder how my mother is going to stand the winter? If she can, it will be a very good thing for her. We are in that part of the year which I like the best—the Rainy or Hurricane Season. "When it is good, it is very, very good; and when it is bad, it is horrid," and our fine days are certainly fine like heaven; such a blue of the sea, such green of the trees, and such crimson of the

hibiscus flowers you never saw; and the air as mild and gentle as a baby's breath, and yet not hot!

The mail is on the move, and I must let up.—With much love, I am, your laddie,

R. L. S.

To Charles Baxter

The following quotes the extract from Fountainhall's *Decisions of the Lords of Council,* etc., which suggested to Stevenson that romance of Cameronian days and the Darien adventure of which, under the title of *Heathercat,* he only lived to write the first few introductory chapters.

6th December, 1893

"*October* 25*th,* 1685.—At Privy Council, George Murray, Lieutenant of the King's Guard, and others, did, on the 21st of September last, obtain a clandestine order of Privy Council to apprehend the person of Janet Pringle, daughter to the late Clifton, and she having retired out of the way upon information, he got an order against Andrew Pringle, her uncle, to produce her. . . . But she having married Andrew Pringle, her uncle's son (to disappoint all their designs of selling her), a boy of thirteen years old." But my boy is to be fourteen, so I extract no further.—Fountainhall, i. 320.

"*May* 6, 1865.—Wappus Pringle of Clifton was still alive after all and in prison for debt, and transacts with Lieutenant Murray, giving security for 7,000 marks."—i. 372.

No, it seems to have been *her* brother who had succeeded.

My dear Charles,—The above is my story, and I wonder if any light can be thrown on it. I prefer the girl's father dead; and the question is, How in that case could Lieutenant George Murray get his order to "apprehend" and his power to "sell" her in marriage?

Or—might Lieutenant G. be her tutor, and she fugi-

tive to the Pringles, and on the discovery of her whereabouts hastily married?

A good legal note on these points is very ardently desired by me; it will be the corner-stone of my novel.

This is for—I am quite wrong to tell you—for you will tell others—and nothing will teach you that all my schemes are in the air, and vanish and reappear again like shapes in the clouds—it is for *Heathercat:* whereof the first volume will be called *The Killing Time,* and I believe I have authorities ample for that. But the second volume is to be called (I believe) *Darien,* and for that I want, I fear, a good deal of truck:—

Darien Papers,
Carstairs Papers,
Marchmont Papers,
Jerviswoode Correspondence,

I hope may do me. Some sort of general history of the Darien affair (if there is a decent one, which I misdoubt), it would also be well to have—the one with most details, if possible. It is singular how obscure to me this decade of Scots history remains, 1690-1700—a deuce of a want of light and grouping to it! However, I believe I shall be mostly out of Scotland in my tale; first in Carolina, next in Darien. I want also—I am the daughter of the horseleech truly—"Black's new large map of Scotland," sheets 3, 4, and 5, a 7s. 6d. touch. I believe, if you can get the

Cauldwell Papers,

they had better come also; and if there be any reasonable work—but no, I must call a halt. . . .

I fear the song looks doubtful, but I'll consider of it, and I can promise you some reminiscences which it will amuse me to write, whether or not it will amuse the public to read of them. But it's an unco business to supply deid-heid coapy.

To J. M. Barrie

Vailima, Samoa, December 7th, 1893

My dear Barrie,—I have received duly the *magnum opus,* and it really is a *magnum opus.** It is a beautiful specimen of Clark's printing, paper sufficient, and the illustrations all my fancy painted. But the particular flower of the flock to whom I have hopelessly lost my heart is Tibby Birse. I must have known Tibby Birse when she was a servant's mantua-maker in Edinburgh and answered to the name of *Miss Broddie.* She used to come and sew with my nurse, sitting with her legs crossed in a masculine manner, and swinging her foot emphatically, she used to pour forth a perfectly unbroken stream of gossip. I didn't hear it, I was immersed in far more important business with a box of bricks, but the recollection of that thin, perpetual, shrill sound of a voice has echoed in my ears sinsyne. I am bound to say she was younger than Tibbie, but there is no mistaking that and the indescribable and eminently Scottish expression.

I have been very much prevented of late, having carried out thoroughly to my own satisfaction two considerable illnesses, had a birthday, and visited Honolulu, where politics are (if possible) a shade more exasperating than they are with us. I am told that it was just when I was on the point of leaving that I received your superlative epistle about the cricket eleven. In that case it is impossible I should have answered it, which is inconsistent with my own recollection of the fact. What *I* remember is, that I sat down under your immediate inspiration and wrote an answer in every way worthy. If I didn't, as it seems proved that I couldn't, it will never be done now. However, I did the next best thing, I equipped my cousin Graham Balfour with a letter of introduction, and from him, if you know how

* *A Window in Thrums,* with illustrations by W. Hole, R.S.A. Hodder and Stoughton, 1892.

—for he is rather of the Scottish character—you may elicit all the information you can possibly wish to have as to us and ours. Do not be bluffed off by the somewhat stern and monumental first impression that he may make upon you. He is one of the best fellows in the world, and the same sort of fool that we are, only better-looking, with all the faults of Vailimans and some of his own—I say nothing about virtues.

I have lately been returning to my wallowing in the mire. When I was a child, and indeed until I was nearly a man, I consistently read Covenanting books. Now that I am a grey-beard—or would be, if I could raise the beard—I have returned, and for weeks back have read little else but Wodrow, Walker, Shields, etc. Of course this is with an idea of a novel, but in the course of it I made a very curious discovery. I have been accustomed to hear refined and intelligent critics —those who know so much better what we are than we do ourselves,—trace down my literary descent from all sorts of people, including Addison, of whom I could never read a word. Well, laigh i' your lug, sir—the clue was found. My style is from the Covenanting writers. Take a particular case—the fondness for rhymes. I don't know of any English prose-writer who rhymes except by accident, and then a stone had better be tied around his neck and himself cast into the sea. But my Covenanting buckies rhyme all the time—a beautiful example of the unconscious rhyme above referred to.

Do you know, and have you really tasted, these delightful works? If not, it should be remedied; there is enough of the Auld Licht in you to be ravished.

I suppose you know that success has so far attended my banners—my political banners I mean, and not my literary. In conjunction with the Three Great Powers I have succeeded in getting rid of My President and My Chief Justice. They've gone home, the one to Germany, the other to Souwegia. I hear little

echoes of footfalls of their departing footsteps through the medium of the newspapers. . . .

Whereupon I make my salute with the firm remark that it is time to be done with trifling and give us a great book, and my ladies fall into line with me to pay you a most respectful courtesy, and we all join in the cry, "Come to Vailima!"

My dear sir, your soul's health is in it—you will never do the great book, you will never cease to work in L., etc., till you come to Vailima.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To R. Le Gallienne

Vailima, Samoa, December 28th, 1893.

DEAR MR. LE GALLIENNE,—I have received some time ago, through our friend Miss Taylor, a book of yours. But that was by no means my first introduction to your name. The same book had stood already on my shelves; I had read articles of yours in the *Academy;* and by a piece of constructive criticism (which I trust was sound) had arrived at the conclusion that you were "Log-roller." Since then I have seen your beautiful verses to your wife. You are to conceive me, then, as only too ready to make the acquaintance of a man who loved good literature and could make it. I had to thank you, besides, for a triumphant exposure of a paradox of my own: the literary-prostitute disappeared from view at a phrase of yours—"The essence is not in the pleasure but the sale." True: you are right, I was wrong; the author is not the whore, but the libertine; and yet I shall let the passage stand. It is an error, but it illustrated the truth for which I was contending, that literature—painting—all art, are no other than pleasures, which we turn into trades.

And more than all this, I had, and I have to thank you for, the intimate loyalty you have shown to myself; for the eager welcome you give to what is good

—for the courtly tenderness with which you touch on my defects. I begin to grow old; I have given my top note, I fancy;—and I have written too many books. The world begins to be weary of the old booth; and if not weary, familiar with the familiarity that breeds contempt. I do not know that I am sensitive to criticism, if it be hostile; I am sensitive indeed, when it is friendly; and when I read such criticism as yours, I am emboldened to go on and praise God.

You are still young, and you may live to do much. The little, artificial popularity of style in England tends, I think, to die out; the British pig returns to his true love, the love of the styleless, of the shapeless, of the slapdash and the disorderly. There is trouble coming, I think; and you may have to hold the fort for us in evil days.

Lastly, let me apologise for the crucifixion that I am inflicting on you (*bien à contre-cœur*) by my bad writing. I was once the best of writers; landladies, puzzled as to my "trade," used to have their honest bosoms set at rest by a sight of a page of manuscript.—"Ah," they would say, "no wonder they pay you for that";—and when I sent it to the printers, it was given to the boys! I was about thirty-nine, I think, when I had a turn of scrivener's palsy; my hand got worse; and for the first time, I received clean proofs. But it has gone beyond that now. I know I am like my old friend James Payn, a terror to correspondents; and you would not believe the care with which this has been written.—Believe me to be, very sincerely yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Mrs. A. Baker

The next is in answer to a request for permission to print some of the writings of R. L. S. in Braille type for the use of the blind.

December, 1893

DEAR MADAM,—There is no trouble, and I wish I could help instead. As it is, I fear I am only going to

put you to trouble and vexation. This Braille writing is a kind of consecration, and I would like if I could to have your copy perfect. The two volumes are to be published as Vols. I. and II. of *The Adventures of David Balfour*. 1st, *Kidnapped;* 2nd, *Catriona*. I am just sending home a corrected *Kidnapped* for this purpose to Messrs. Cassell, and in order that I may if possible be in time, I send it to you first of all. Please, as soon as you have noted the changes, forward the same to Cassell and Co., La Belle Sauvage Yard, Ludgate Hill.

I am writing to them by this mail to send you *Catriona*.

You say, dear madam, you are good enough to say, it is " a keen pleasure " to you to bring my book within the reach of the blind.

Conceive then what it is to me! and believe me, sincerely yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

I was a barren tree before,
I blew a quenchèd coal,
I could not, on their midnight shore,
The lonely blind console.

A moment, lend your hand, I bring
My sheaf for you to bind,
And you can teach my words to sing
In the darkness of the blind.

R. L. S.

To HENRY JAMES

Apia, December, 1893

MY DEAR HENRY JAMES,—The mail has come upon me, like an armed man three days earlier than was expected; and the Lord help me! It is impossible I should answer anybody the way they should be. Your jubilation over *Catriona* did me good, and still more the subtlety and truth of your remark on the starving of the visual sense in that book. 'Tis true, and unless I make the greater effort—and am, as a step to that,

convinced of its necessity—it will be more true I fear in the future. I *hear* people talking and I *feel* them acting, and that seems to me to be fiction. My two aims may be described as—

1*st.* War to the adjective.
2*nd.* Death to the optic nerve.

Admitted we live in an age of the optic nerve in literature. For how many centuries did literature get along without a sign of it? However, I'll consider your letter.

How exquisite is your character of the critic in *Essays in London!* I doubt if you have done any single thing so satisfying as a piece of style and of insight.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

Recounting a scene of gratitude for bounty shown by him to the prisoners in Apia gaol.

[*Vailima, December,* 1893]

My dear Colvin,—One page out of my picture book I must give you. Fine burning day; ½ past two P.M. We four begin to rouse up from reparatory slumbers, yawn, and groan, get a cup of tea, and miserably dress: we have had a party the day before, Xmas Day, with all the boys absent but one, and latterly two; we had cooked all day long, a cold dinner, and lo! at two our guests began to arrive, though dinner was not till six; they were sixteen, and fifteen slept the night and breakfasted. Conceive, then, how unwillingly we climb on our horses and start off in the hottest part of the afternoon to ride 4½ miles, attend a native feast in the gaol, and ride four and a half miles back. But there is no help for it. I am a sort of father of the political prisoners, and have *charge d'âmes* in that riotously absurd establishment, Apia Gaol. The twenty-three (I think it is) chiefs act as under gaolers. The

other day they told the Captain of an attempt to escape. One of the lesser political prisoners the other day effected a swift capture, while the Captain was trailing about with the warrant; the man came to see what was wanted; came, too, flanked by the former gaoler; my prisoner offers to show him the dark cell, shoves him in, and locks the door. "Why do you do that?" cries the former gaoler. "A warrant," says he. Finally, the chiefs actually feed the soldiery who watch them!

The gaol is a wretched little building, containing a little room, and three cells, on each side of a central passage; it is surrounded by a fence of corrugated iron, and shows, over the top of that, only a gable end with the inscription *O le Fale Puipui*. It is on the edge of the mangrove swamp, and is reached by a sort of causeway of turf. When we drew near, we saw the gates open and a prodigious crowd outside—I mean prodigious for Apia, perhaps a hundred and fifty people. The two sentries at the gate stood to arms passively, and there seemed to be a continuous circulation inside and out. The captain came to meet us; our boy, who had been sent ahead, was there to take the horses; and we passed inside the court which was full of food, and rang continuously to the voice of the caller of gifts; I had to blush a little later when my own present came, and I heard my one pig and eight miserable pineapples being counted out like guineas. In the four corners of the yard and along one wall, there are make-shift, dwarfish, Samoan houses or huts, which have been run up since Captain Wurmbrand came, to accommodate the chiefs. Before that they were all crammed into the six cells, and locked in for the night, some of them with dysentery. They are wretched constructions enough, but sanctified by the presence of chiefs. We heard a man corrected loudly to-day for saying "*Fale*" of one of them; "*Maota*" roared the highest chief present—"palace." About eighteen chiefs, gorgeously arrayed, stood up to greet us, and led us into one of

these *maotas*, where you may be sure we had to crouch, almost to kneel, to enter, and where a row of pretty girls occupied one side to make the ava (kava). The highest chief present was a magnificent man, as high chiefs usually are; I find I cannot describe him; his face is full of shrewdness and authority; his figure like Ajax; his name Auilua. He took the head of the building and put Belle on his right hand. Fanny was called first for the ava (kava). Our names were called in English style, the high-chief wife of Mr. St.—(an unpronounceable something); Mrs. Straw, and the like. And when we went into the other house to eat, we found we were seated alternately with chiefs about the—table, I was about to say, but rather floor. Everything was to be done European style with a vengeance! We were the only whites present, except Wurmbrand, and still I had no suspicion of the truth. They began to take off their ulas (necklaces of scarlet seeds) and hang them about our necks; we politely resisted, and were told that the king (who had stopped off their *siva*) had sent down to the prison a message to the effect that he was to give a dinner to-morrow, and wished their second-hand ulas for it. Some of them were content; others not. There was a ring of anger in the boy's voice, as he told us we were to wear them past the king's house. Dinner over, I must say they are moderate eaters at a feast, we returned to the ava house; and then the curtain drew suddenly up upon the set scene. We took our seats, and Auilua began to give me a present, recapitulating each article as he gave it out, with some appropriate comment. He called me several times "their only friend," said they were all in slavery, had no money, and these things were all made by the hands of their families—nothing bought; he had one phrase, in which I heard his voice rise up to a note of triumph: "This is a present from the poor prisoners to the rich man." Thirteen pieces of tapa, some of them surprisingly fine, one I think unique; thirty fans of every shape and colour; a kava cup, etc., etc. At first Auilua conducted

the business with weighty gravity; but before the end of the thirty fans, his comments began to be humorous. When he came to a little basket, he said: "Here was a little basket for Tusitala to put sixpence in, when he could get hold of one"—with a delicious grimace. I answered as best I was able through a miserable interpreter; and all the while, as I went on, I heard the crier outside in the court calling my gift of food, which I perceived was to be Gargantuan. I had brought but three boys with me. It was plain that they were wholly overpowered. We proposed to send for our gifts on the morrow; but no, said the interpreter, that would never do; they must go away to-day, Mulinuu must see my porters taking away the gifts,—"make 'em jella," quoth the interpreter. And I began to see the reason of this really splendid gift; one half, gratitude to me —one half, a wipe at the king.

And now, to introduce darker colours, you must know this visit of mine to the gaol was just a little bit risky; we had several causes for anxiety; it *might* have been put up, to connect with a Tamasese rising. Tusitala and his family would be good hostages. On the other hand, there were the Mulinuu people all about. We could see the anxiety of Captain Wurmbrand, no less anxious to have us go, than he had been to see us come; he was deadly white and plainly had a bad headache, in the noisy scene. Presently, the noise grew uproarious; there was a rush at the gate—a rush *in*, not a rush *out*—where the two sentries still stood passive; Auilua leaped from his place (it was then that I got the name of Ajax for him) and the next moment we heard his voice roaring and saw his mighty figure swaying to and fro in the hurly-burly. As the deuce would have it, we could not understand a word of what was going on. It might be nothing more than the ordinary "grab racket" with which a feast commonly concludes; it might be something worse. We made what arrangements we could for my tapa, fans, etc., as well as for my five pigs, my masses of fish, taro, etc., and with

great dignity, and ourselves laden with ulas and other decorations, passed between the sentries among the howling mob to our horses. All's well that ends well. Owing to Fanny and Belle, we had to walk; and, as Lloyd said, "he had at last ridden in a circus." The whole length of Apia we paced our triumphal progress, past the king's palace, past the German firm at Sogi —you can follow it on the map—amidst admiring exclamations of "*Manaia*"—beautiful—it may be rendered "O my! ain't they dandy"—until we turned up at last into our road as the dusk deepened into night. It was really exciting. And there is one thing sure: no such feast was ever made for a single family, and no such present ever given to a single white man. It is something to have been the hero of it. And whatever other ingredients there were, undoubtedly gratitude was present. As money value I have actually gained on the transaction!

Your note arrived: little profit, I must say. Scott has already put his nose in, in *St. Ives*, sir; but his appearance is not yet complete; nothing is in that romance, except the story. I have to announce that I am off work, probably for six months. I must own that I have overworked bitterly—overworked—there, that's legible. My hand is a thing that was, and in the meanwhile so are my brains. And here, in the very midst, comes a plausible scheme to make Vailima pay, which will perhaps let me into considerable expense just when I don't want it. You know the vast cynicism of my view of affairs, and how readily and (as some people say) with how much gusto I take the darker view?

Why do you not send me Jerome K. Jerome's paper, and let me see *The Ebb-Tide* as a serial? It is always very important to see a thing in different presentments. I want every number. Politically we begin the new year with every expectation of a bust in 2 or 3 days, a bust which may spell destruction to Samoa. I have written to Baxter about his proposal.*

* The scheme of the Edinburgh Edition.

XIV

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Concluded*

FOURTH YEAR AT VAILIMA—THE END

JANUARY—DECEMBER, 1894

XIV

LIFE IN SAMOA—*Concluded*

THIS new year began for Stevenson with an illness which left none of the usual lowering consequences, and for Samoa with fresh rumours of war, which were not realised until later in the year, and then—at least in the shape of serious hostilities—in the district of Atua only and not in his own. On the whole Stevenson's bodily health and vigour kept at a higher level than during the previous year. But for serious imaginative writing he found himself still unfit, and the sense that his old facility had for the time being failed him caused him much inward misgiving. In his correspondence the misgiving mood was allowed to appear pretty freely; but in personal intercourse his high spirits seemed to his family and visitors as unfailing as ever. Several things happened during the year to give him peculiar pleasure; first, at the beginning of the year, the news of Mr. Baxter's carefully prepared scheme of the Edinburgh Edition, and of its acceptance by the publishers concerned. On this subject much correspondence naturally passed between him and Mr. Baxter and myself, over and above that which is here published. By the early autumn the financial success of the scheme was quite assured and made known to him by cable; but he did not seem altogether to realise the completeness of relief from money anxieties which the assurance was meant to convey to him. Other pleasurable circumstances were the return of Mr. Graham Balfour after a prolonged absence; the visit of a spirited and accomplished young Irishman of business and of letters, Mr. Sidney Lysaght (see below, pp. 269, 274, etc.); and the frequent society of the officers of H.M.S.

Curaçoa, with whom he was on terms of particular regard and cordiality. Lastly, he was deeply touched and gratified by the action of the native political prisoners, towards whom he had shown much thoughtful kindness during their months of detention, in volunteering as testimony of gratitude after their release to re-make with their own hands the branch road leading to his house: "the Road of Loving Hearts," as it came to be christened. Soon afterwards, the anniversaries of his own birthday and of the American Thanksgiving feast brought evidences hardly less welcome, after so much contention and annoyance as the island affairs and politics had involved him in, of the honour and affection in which he was held by all that was best in the white community. By each succeeding mail came stronger proofs from home of the manner in which men of letters of the younger generation had come to regard him as a master, an example, and a friend.

But in spite of all these causes of pleasure, his letters showed that his old invincible spirit of inward cheerfulness was beginning not infrequently to give way to moods of depression and overstrained feeling. The importunity of these moods was no doubt due to some physical premonition that his vital powers, so frail from the cradle and always with so cheerful a courage overtaxed, were near exhaustion. During the first months of the year he attempted little writing; in the late spring and early summer his work was chiefly on the annals of his family and on the tale *St. Ives.* The latter he found uphill work: after the first ten or twelve chapters, which are in his happiest vein, the narrative, as he himself was painfully aware, began to flag. Towards the end of October he gave it up for the time being and turned to a more arduous task, the tragic *Weir of Hermiston.* On this theme he felt his inspiration return, and during the month of November and the first days of December wrought once more at the full pitch of his powers and in the conscious delight of their exercise. On the third of

December, after a morning of happy work and pleasant correspondence, he was seen gazing long and wistfully toward the forest-clad mountain, on a ledge of which he had desired that he should be buried. In the afternoon he brought his morning's work to his wife, the most exacting of his critics; asked her whether it was not well done; and in her glow of admiring assent found his confirmation and his reward. Nevertheless she could not throw off an oppressive sense of coming calamity. He was reassuring her with gay and laughing talk when the sudden rupture of a blood-vessel in the brain laid him almost in a moment unconscious at her feet; and before two hours were over he had passed away. All the world knows how his body was carried by the loving hands of his native servants to the burial place of his choice, and rests there with the words of his own requiem engraved on his tomb —the words which we have seen him putting on paper when he was at grips with death fifteen years before in California—

> "Home is the sailor, home from sea,
> And the hunter home from the hill."

To Charles Baxter

Mr. Baxter, after much preliminary consideration and inquiry, had matured and submitted to Stevenson the scheme of the Edinburgh Edition, to which this letter is his reply. The paper on *Treasure Island* appeared in the *Idler* for August, 1894, and was afterwards reprinted in the Edinburgh Edition, Vol. XXI (1896), *Juvenilia,* etc. In some later editions it is prefixed as an introduction to *Treasure Island* itself (see South Seas Edition, Vol. VI).

1st January, '94

My dear Charles,—I am delighted with your idea, and first, I will here give an amended plan and afterwards give you a note of some of the difficulties.

[Plan of the Edinburgh Edition—14 vols.]

. . . It may be a question whether my *Times* letters might not be appended to the *Footnote* with a note of the dates of discharge of Cedercrantz and Pilsach.

I am particularly pleased with this idea of yours, because I am come to a dead stop. I never can remember how bad I have been before, but at any rate I am bad enough just now, I mean as to literature; in health I am well and strong. I take it I shall be six months before I'm heard of again, and this time I could put in to some advantage in revising the text and (if it were thought desirable) writing prefaces. I do not know how many of them might be thought desirable. I have written a paper on *Treasure Island,* which is to appear shortly. *Master of Ballantrae*—I have one drafted. *The Wrecker* is quite sufficiently done already with the last chapter, but I suppose an historic introduction to *David Balfour* is quite unavoidable. *Prince Otto* I don't think I could say anything about, and *Black Arrow* don't want to. But it is probable I could say something to the volume of *Travels.* In the verse business I can do just what I like better than anything else, and extend *Underwoods* with a lot of unpublished stuff. *A propos,* if I were to get printed off a very few poems which are somewhat too intimate

for the public, could you get them run up in some luxurious manner, so that fools might be induced to buy them in just a sufficient quantity to pay expenses and the thing remain still in a manner private? We could supply photographs of the illustrations—and the poems are of Vailima and the family—I should much like to get this done as a surprise for Fanny.

R. L. S.

To H. B. Baildon

Vailima, January 15th, 1894

My dear Baildon,—Last mail brought your book and its Dedication. "Frederick Street and the gardens, and the short-lived Jack o' Lantern," are again with me—and the note of the east wind, and Froebel's voice, and the smell of soup in Thomson's stair. Truly, you had no need to put yourself under the protection of any other saint, were that saint our Tamate himself! Yourself were enough, and yourself coming with so rich a sheaf.

For what is this that you say about the Muses? They have certainly never better inspired you than in "Jael and Sisera," and "Herodias and John the Baptist," good stout poems, fiery and sound. "'Tis but a mask and behind it chuckles the God of the Garden," I shall never forget. By the by, an error of the press, page 49, line 4, "No infant's lesson are the ways of God." *The* is dropped.

And this reminds me you have a bad habit which is to be comminated in my theory of letters. Same page, two lines lower: "But the vulture's track" is surely as fine to the ear as "But vulture's track," and this latter version has a dreadful baldness. The reader goes on with a sense of impoverishment, of unnecessary sacrifice; he has been robbed by footpads and goes scouting for his lost article! Again, in the second Epode, these fine verses would surely sound much finer if they began, "As a hardy climber who has set his

heart," than with the jejune "As hardy climber." I do not know why you permit yourself this licence with grammar; you show, in so many pages, that you are superior to the paltry sense of rhythm which usually dictates it—as though some poetaster had been suffered to correct the poet's text. By the way, I confess to a heartfelt weakness for *Auriculas*.—Believe me the very grateful and characteristic pick-thank, but still sincere and affectionate,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To W. H. Low

Vailima, January 15th, 1894

MY DEAR LOW,—. . . Pray you, stoop your proud head and sell yourself to some Jew magazine, and make the visit out. I assure you, this is the spot for a sculptor or painter. This, and no other—I don't say to stay there, but to come once and get the living colour into them. I am used to it; I do not notice it; rather prefer my grey, freezing recollections of Scotland; but there it is, and every morning is a thing to give thanks for, and every night another—bar when it rains, of course.

About *The Wrecker*—rather late days, and I still suspect I had somehow offended you; however, all's well that ends well, and I am glad I am forgiven—did you not fail to appreciate the attitude of Dodd? He was a fizzle and a stick, he knew it, he knew nothing else, and there is an undercurrent of bitterness in him. And then the problem that Pinkerton laid down: why the artist can *do nothing else?* is one that continually exercises myself. He cannot: granted. But Scott could. And Montaigne. And Julius Cæsar. And many more. And why can't R. L. S.? Does it not amaze you? It does me. I think of the Renaissance fellows, and their all-round human sufficiency, and compare it with the ineffable smallness of the field in

which we labour and in which we do so little. I think *David Balfour* a nice little book, and very artistic, and just the thing to occupy the leisure of a busy man; but for the top flower of a man's life it seems to me inadequate. Small is the word; it is a small age, and I am of it. I could have wished to be otherwise busy in this world. I ought to have been able to build lighthouses and write *David Balfours* too. *Hinc illae lacrymae.* I take my own case as most handy, but it is as illustrative of my quarrel with the age. We take all these pains, and we don't do as well as Michael Angelo or Leonardo, or even Fielding, who was an active magistrate, or Richardson, who was a busy bookseller. *J'ai honte pour nous;* my ears burn.

I am amazed at the effect which this Chicago exhibition has produced upon you and others. It set Mrs. Fairchild literally mad—to judge by her letters. And I wish I had seen anything so influential. I suppose there was an aura, a halo, some sort of effulgency about the place; for here I find you louder than the rest. Well, it may be there is a time coming; and I wonder, when it comes, whether it will be a time of little, exclusive, one-eyed rascals like you and me, or parties of the old stamp who can paint and fight, and write and keep books of double entry, and sculp and scalp. It might be. You have a lot of stuff in the kettle, and a great deal of it Celtic. I have changed my mind progressively about England: practically the whole of Scotland is Celtic, and the western half of England, and all Ireland, and the Celtic blood makes a rare blend for art. If it is stiffened up with Latin blood, you get the French. We were less lucky: we had only Scandinavians, themselves decidedly artistic, and the Low-German lot. However, that is a good starting-point, and with all the other elements in your crucible, it may come to something great very easily. I wish you would hurry up and let me see it. Here is a long while I have been waiting for something *good* in art; and what have I seen? Zola's *Débâcle* and a few of

Kipling's tales. Are you a reader of Barbey d'Aurévilly? He is a never-failing source of pleasure to me, for my sins, I suppose. What a work is the *Rideau Cramoisi!* and *L'Ensorcelée!* and *Le Chevalier des Touches!*

This is degenerating into mere twaddle. So please remember us all most kindly to Mrs. Low, and believe me ever yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—Were all your privateers voiceless in the War of 1812? Did *no one* of them write memoirs? I shall have to do my privateer from chic, if you can't help me.* My application to Scribner has been quite in vain. See if you can get hold of some historic sharp in the club, and tap him; they must some of them have written memoirs or notes of some sort; perhaps still unprinted; if that be so, get them copied for me.

R. L. S.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

Vailima, Jan. 29th, 1894

MY DEAR COLVIN,—I had fully intended for your education and moral health to fob you off with the meanest possible letter this month, and unfortunately I find I will have to treat you to a good long account of matters here. I believe I have told you before about Tui-male-alii-fano and my taking him down to introduce him to the Chief Justice. Well, Tui came back to Vailima one day in the blackest sort of spirits, saying the war was decided, that he also must join in the fight, and that there was no hope whatever of success. He must fight as a point of honour for his family and country; and in his case, even if he escaped on the field of battle, deportation was the least to be looked for. He

* This question is with a view to the adventures of the hero in *St. Ives,* who according to Stevenson's original plan was to have been picked up from his foundered balloon by an American privateer.

said he had a letter of complaint from the Great Council of A'ana which he wished to lay before the Chief Justice; and he asked me to accompany him as if I were his nurse. We went down about dinner time; and by the way received from a lurking native the famous letter in an official blue envelope gummed up to the edges. It proved to be a declaration of war, quite formal, but with some variations that really made you bounce. White residents were directly threatened, bidden to have nothing to do with the King's party, not to receive their goods in their houses, etc., under pain of an accident. However, the Chief Justice took it very wisely and mildly, and between us, he and I and Tui made up a plan which has proved successful —so far. The war is over—fifteen chiefs are this morning undergoing a curious double process of law, comparable to a court martial; in which their complaints are to be considered, and if possible righted, while their conduct is to be criticised, perhaps punished. Up to now, therefore, it has been a most successful policy; but the danger is before us. My own feeling would decidedly be that all would be spoiled by a single execution. The great hope after all lies in the knotless, rather flaccid character, of the people. These are no Maoris. All the powers that Cedercrantz let go by disuse the new C. J. is stealthily and boldly taking back again; perhaps some others also. He has shamed the chiefs in Mulinuu into a law against taking heads, with a punishment of six years' imprisonment and, for a chief, degradation. To him has been left the sole conduct of this anxious and decisive inquiry. If the natives stand it, why, well! But I am nervous. . . .

To H. B. Baildon

Vailima, January 30th, 1894

My dear Baildon,—"Call not blessed."—Yes, if I could die just now, or say in half a year, I should have

had a splendid time of it on the whole. But it gets a little stale, and my work will begin to senesce; and parties to shy bricks at me; and now it begins to look as if I should survive to see myself impotent and forgotten. It's a pity suicide is not thought the ticket in the best circles.

But your letter goes on to congratulate me on having done the one thing I am a little sorry for; a little —not much—for my father himself lived to think that I had been wiser than he. But the cream of the jest is that I have lived to change my mind; and think that he was wiser than I. Had I been an engineer, and literature my amusement, it would have been better perhaps. I pulled it off, of course, I won the wager, and it is pleasant while it lasts; but how long will it last? I don't know, say the Bells of Old Bow.

All of which goes to show that nobody is quite sane in judging himself. Truly, had I given way and gone in for engineering, I should be dead by now. Well, the gods know best.

. . . I hope you got my letter about the *Rescue*.—Adieu.

R. L. S.

True for you about the benefit: except by kisses, jests, song, *et hoc genus omne*, man *cannot* convey benefit to another. The universal benefactor has been there before him.

To Sidney Colvin

Feb., 1894

Dear Colvin,—By a reaction, when your letter is a little decent, mine is to be naked and unashamed. We have been much exercised. No one can prophesy here, of course, and the balance still hangs trembling, but I *think* it will go for peace.

The mail was very late this time; hence the paltriness of this note. When it came and I had read it, I

retired with *The Ebb-Tide* and read it all before I slept. I did not dream it was near as good; I am afraid I think it excellent. A little indecision about Attwater, not much. It gives me great hope, as I see I *can* work in that constipated, mosaic manner, which is what I have to do just now with *Weir of Hermiston.*

We have given a ball; I send you a paper describing the event. We have two guests in the house, Captain-Count Wurmbrand and Monsieur Albert de Lautreppe. Lautreppe is awfully nice—a quiet, gentlemanly fellow, *gonflé de rêves,* as he describes himself—once a sculptor in the atelier of Henry Crosse, he knows something of art, and is really a resource to me.

Letter from Meredith very kind. Have you seen no more of Graham?

What about *My Grandfather?* The family history will grow to be quite a chapter.

I suppose I am growing sensitive; perhaps, by living among barbarians, I expect more civility. Look at this from the author of a very interesting and laudatory critique. He gives quite a false description of something of mine, and talks about my "insolence." Frankly, I supposed "insolence" to be a tapu word. I do not use it to a gentleman, I would not write it of a gentleman: I may be wrong, but I believe we did not write it of a gentleman in old days, and in my view he (clever fellow as he is) wants to be kicked for applying it to me. By writing a novel—even a bad one—I do not make myself a criminal for anybody to insult. This may amuse you. But either there is a change in journalism, too gradual for you to remark it on the spot, or there is a change in me. I cannot bear these phrases; I long to resent them. My forbears, the tenant farmers of the Mains, would not have suffered such expressions unless it had been from Cauldwell, or Rowallan, or maybe Auchendrane. My Family Pride bristles. I am like the negro; "I just heard last night" who my great, great, great, great grandfather was.—Ever yours, R. L. S.

To J. H. Bates

The next is to a correspondent in Cincinnati, who had been the founder of an R. L. S. Society or "Chapter" in that city, "originally," he writes me, under date April 7, 1895, "the outcome of a boyish fancy, but it has now grown into something more substantial."

Vailima, Samoa, March 25th, 1894

My dear Mr. Joe H. Bates,—I shall have the greatest pleasure in acceding to your complimentary request. I shall think it an honour to be associated with your chapter, and I need not remind you (for you have said it yourself) how much depends upon your own exertions whether to make it to me a real honour or only a derision. This is to let you know that I accept the position that you have seriously offered to me in a quite serious spirit. I need scarce tell you that I shall always be pleased to receive reports of your proceedings; and if I do not always acknowledge them, you are to remember that I am a man very much occupied otherwise, and not at all to suppose that I have lost interest in my chapter.

In this world, which (as you justly say) is so full of sorrow and suffering, it will always please me to remember that my name is connected with some efforts after alleviation, nor less so with purposes of innocent recreation which, after all, are the only certain means at our disposal for bettering human life.

With kind regards, to yourself, to Mr. L. C. Congdon, to E. M. G. Bates, and to Mr. Edward Hugh Higlee Bates, and the heartiest wishes for the future success of the chapter, believe me, yours cordially,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

To William Archer

Vailima, Samoa, March 27th, 1894

My dear Archer,—Many thanks for your *Theatrical World.* Do you know, it strikes me as being really

very good? I have not yet read much of it, but so far as I have looked, there is not a dull and not an empty page in it. Hazlitt, whom you must often have thought of, would have been pleased. Come to think of it, I shall put this book upon the Hazlitt shelf. You have acquired a manner that I can only call august; otherwise, I should have to call it such amazing impudence. The *Bauble Shop* and *Becket* are examples of what I mean. But it "sets you weel."

Marjorie Fleming I have known, as you surmise, for long. She was possibly—no, I take back possibly—she was one of the greatest works of God. Your note about the resemblance of her verses to mine gave me great joy, though it only proved me a plagiarist. By the by, was it not over *The Child's Garden of Verses* that we first scraped acquaintance? I am sorry indeed to hear that my esteemed correspondent Tomarcher has such poor taste in literature.* I fear he cannot have inherited this trait from his dear papa. Indeed, I may say I know it, for I remember the energy of papa's disapproval when the work passed through his hands on its way to a second birth, which none regrets more than myself. It is an odd fact, or perhaps a very natural one; I find few greater pleasures than reading my own works, but I never, O I never read *The Black Arrow*. In that country Tomarcher reigns supreme. Well, and after all, if Tomarcher likes it, it has not been written in vain.

We have just now a curious breath from Europe. A young fellow just beginning letters, and no fool, turned up here with a letter of introduction in the well-known blue ink and decorative hieroglyphs of George Meredith. His name may be known to you. It is Sidney Lysaght. He is staying with us but a day or two, and it is strange to me and not unpleasant to hear all the names, old and new, come up again. But oddly the new are so much more in number. If I revisited the glimpses of the moon on your side of

* As to admire *The Black Arrow*.

the ocean, I should know comparatively few of them.

My amanuensis deserts me—I should have said you, for yours is the loss, my script having lost all bond with humanity. One touch of nature makes the whole world kin: that nobody can read my hand. It is a humiliating circumstance that thus evens us with printers!

You must sometimes think it strange—or perhaps it is only I that should so think it—to be following the old round, in the gas lamps and the crowded theatres, when I am away here in the tropical forest and the vast silences!

My dear Archer, my wife joins me in the best wishes to yourself and Mrs. Archer, not forgetting Tom; and I am yours very cordially,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Sidney Colvin

Partly concerning a fresh rising, this time of the partisans of Tamasese from the district of Atua, which had occurred and was after some time suppressed; partly in reference to the visit of Mr. Sidney Lysaght; partly in reply to a petition that his letters might be less entirely taken up with native affairs, of relatively little meaning to his correspondent.

[*Vailima, April,* 1894]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—This is the very day the mail goes, and I have as yet written you nothing. But it was just as well—as it was all about my "blacks and chocolates," and what of it had relation to whites you will read some of in the *Times*. It means, as you will see, that I have at one blow quarrelled with *all* the officials of Samoa, the Foreign Office, and I suppose her Majesty the Queen with milk and honey blest. But you'll see in the *Times*. I am very well indeed, but just about dead and mighty glad the mail is near here, and I can just give up all hope of contending with my letters, and lie down for the rest of the day. These

Times letters are not easy to write. And I daresay the consuls say, "Why, then, does he write them?"

I had miserable luck with *St. Ives;* being already halfway through it, a book I had ordered six months ago arrives at last, and I have to change the first half of it from top to bottom! How could I have dreamed the French prisoners were watched over like a female charity school, kept in a grotesque livery, and shaved twice a week? And I had made all my points on the idea that they were unshaved and clothed anyhow. However, this last is better business; if only the book had come when I ordered it! *A propos,* many of the books you announce don't come as a matter of fact. When they are of any value, it is best to register them. Your letter, alas! is not here; I sent it down to the cottage, with all my mail, for Fanny; on Sunday night a boy comes up with a lantern and a note from Fanny, to say the woods are full of Atuas and I must bring a horse down that instant, as the posts are established beyond her on the road, and she does not want to have the fight going on between us. Impossible to get a horse; so I started in the dark on foot, with a revolver, and my spurs on my bare feet, leaving directions that the boy should mount after me with the horse. Try such an experience on Our Road once, and do it, if you please, after you have been down town from nine o'clock till six, on board the ship-of-war lunching, teaching Sunday School (I actually do) and making necessary visits; and the Saturday before, having sat all day from ½-past six to ½-past four, scriving at my *Times* letter. About half-way up, just in fact at "point" of the outposts, I met Fanny coming up. Then all night long I was being awakened with scares that really should be looked into, though I *knew* there was nothing in them and no bottom to the whole story; and the drums and shouts and cries from Tanugamanono and the town keeping up an all-night corybantic chorus in the moonlight—the moon rose late—and the searchlight of the warship in the harbour making a

jewel of brightness as it lit up the bay of Apia in the distance. And then next morning, about eight o'clock, a drum coming out of the woods and a party of patrols who had been in the woods on our left front (which is our true rear) coming up to the house, and meeting there another party who had been in the woods on our right {front / rear} which is Vaea Mountain, and 43 of them being entertained to ava and biscuits on the verandah, and marching off at last in single file for Apia. Briefly, it is not much wonder if your letter and my whole mail was left at the cottage, and I have no means of seeing or answering particulars.

The whole thing was nothing but a bottomless scare; it was *obviously* so; you couldn't make a child believe it was anything else, but it has made the consuls sit up. My own private scares were really abominably annoying; as for instance after I had got to sleep for the ninth time perhaps—and that was no easy matter either, for I had a crick in my neck so agonising that I had to sleep sitting up—I heard noises as of a man being murdered in the boys' house. To be sure, said I, this is nothing again, but if a man's head was being taken, the noises would be the same! So I had to get up, stifle my cries of agony from the crick, get my revolver, and creep out stealthily to the boys' house. And there were two of them sitting up, keeping watch of their own accord like good boys, and whiling the time over a game of Sweepi (Cascino—the whist of our islanders)—and one of them was our champion idiot, Misifolo, and I suppose he was holding bad cards, and losing all the time—and these noises were his humorous protests against Fortune!

Well, excuse this excursion into my "blacks and chocolates." It is the last. You will have heard from Lysaght how I failed to write last mail. The said Lysaght seems to me a very nice fellow. We were only sorry he could not stay with us longer. Austin

came back from school last week, which made a great time for the Amanuensis, you may be sure. Then on Saturday, the *Curaçoa* came in—same commission, with all our old friends; and on Sunday, as already mentioned, Austin and I went down to service and had lunch afterwards in the wardroom. The officers were awfully nice to Austin; they are the most amiable ship in the world; and after lunch we had a paper handed round on which we were to guess, and sign our guess of the number of leaves on the pineapple; I never saw this game before, but it seems it is much practised in the Queen's Navee. When all have betted, one of the party begins to strip the pineapple head, and the person whose guess is furthest out has to pay for the sherry. My equanimity was disturbed by shouts of *The American Commodore*, and I found that Austin had entered and lost about a bottle of sherry! He turned with great composure and addressed me. "I am afraid I must look to you, Uncle Louis." The Sunday School racket is only an experiment which I took up at the request of the late American Land Commissioner; I am trying it for a month, and if I do as ill as I believe, and the boys find it only half as tedious as I do, I think it will end in a month. I have *carte blanche*, and say what I like; but does any single soul understand me?

Fanny is on the whole very much better. Lloyd has been under the weather, and goes for a month to the South Island of New Zealand for some skating, save the mark! I get all the skating I want among officials.

Dear Colvin, please remember that my life passes among my "blacks or chocolates." If I were to do as you propose, in a bit of a tiff, it would cut you off entirely from my life. You must try to exercise a trifle of imagination, and put yourself, perhaps with an effort, into some sort of sympathy with these people, or how am I to write to you? I think you are truly a little too Cockney with me.—Ever yours,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To W. B. Yeats

Vailima, Samoa, April 14, 1894

Dear Sir,—Long since when I was a boy I remember the emotions with which I repeated Swinburne's poems and ballads. Some ten years ago, a similar spell was cast upon me by Meredith's *Love in the Valley;* the stanzas beginning "When her mother tends her" haunted me and made me drunk like wine, and I remember waking with them all the echoes of the hills about Hyères. It may interest you to hear that I have a third time fallen in slavery: this is to your poem called the *Lake Isle of Innisfree.* It is so quaint and airy, simple, artful, and eloquent to the heart—but I seek words in vain. Enough that "always night and day I hear lake water lapping with low sounds on the shore," and am, yours gratefully,

Robert Louis Stevenson.

To George Meredith

The young lady referred to in the following is Mr. Meredith's daughter, now Mrs. H. Sturgis. It is only in the first few chapters of Mr. Meredith's *Amazing Marriage* that the character of Gower Woodseer has been allowed to retain any likeness to that of R. L. S. One of the thousand reasons for wishing that R. L. S. had lived on, is that he might have known of Box Hill being saved for good and all.

Vailima, Samoa, April 17*th,* 1894

My dear Meredith,—Many good things have the gods sent to me of late. First of all there was a letter from you by the kind hand of Mariette, if she is not too great a lady to be remembered in such a style; and then there came one Lysaght with a charming note of introduction in the well-known hand itself. We had but a few days of him, and liked him well. There was a sort of geniality and inward fire about him at which I warmed my hands. It is long since I have seen a

young man who has left on me such a favourable impression; and I find myself telling myself, "O, I must tell this to Lysaght," or, "This will interest him," in a manner very unusual after so brief an acquaintance. The whole of my family shared in this favourable impression, and my halls have re-echoed ever since, I am sure he will be amused to know, with *Widdicombe Fair*.

He will have told you doubtless more of my news than I could tell you myself; he has your European perspective, a thing long lost to me. I heard with a great deal of interest the news of Box Hill. And so I understand it is to be enclosed! Allow me to remark, that seems a far more barbaric trait of manners than the most barbarous of ours. We content ourselves with cutting off an occasional head.

I hear we may soon expect *The Amazing Marriage*. You know how long, and with how much curiosity, I have looked forward to the book. Now, in so far as you have adhered to your intention, Gower Woodseer will be a family portrait, age twenty-five, of the highly respectable and slightly influential and fairly aged *Tusitala*. You have not known that gentleman; console yourself, he is not worth knowing. At the same time, my dear Meredith, he is very sincerely yours—for what he is worth, for the memories of old times, and in the expectation of many pleasures still to come. I suppose we shall never see each other again; flitting youths of the Lysaght species may occasionally cover these unconscionable leagues and bear greetings to and fro. But we ourselves must be content to converse on an occasional sheet of note-paper, and I shall never see whether you have grown older, and you shall never deplore that Gower Woodseer should have declined into the pantaloon *Tusitala*. It is perhaps better so. Let us continue to see each other as we were, and accept, my dear Meredith, my love and respect.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—My wife joins me in the kindest messages to yourself and Mariette.

To Charles Baxter

[*Vailima*] *April* 17, '94

My dear Charles,—*St. Ives* is now well on its way into the second volume. There remains no mortal doubt that it will reach the three-volume standard.

I am very anxious that you should send me—

1st. *Tom and Jerry*, a cheap edition.

2nd. The book by Ashton—the *Dawn of the Century*, I think it was called—which Colvin sent me, and which has miscarried, and

3rd. If it is possible, a file of the *Edinburgh Courant* for the years 1811, 1812, 1813, or 1814. I should not care for a whole year. If it were possible to find me three months, winter months by preference, it would do my business not only for *St. Ives*, but for the *Justice-Clerk* as well. Suppose this to be impossible, perhaps I could get the loan of it from somebody; or perhaps it would be possible to have some one read a file for me and make notes. This would be extremely bad, as unhappily one man's food is another man's poison, and the reader would probably leave out everything I should choose. But if you are reduced to that, you might mention to the man who is to read for me that balloon ascensions are in the order of the day.

4th. It might be as well to get a book on balloon ascension, particularly in the early part of the century.

. . . . . .

At last this book has come from Scribner, and, alas! I have the first six or seven chapters of *St. Ives* to recast entirely. Who could foresee that they clothed the French prisoners in yellow? But that one fatal fact—and also that they shaved them twice a week—

damns the whole beginning. If it had been sent in time, it would have saved me a deal of trouble. . . .

I have had a long letter from Dr. Scott Dalgleish, 25 Mayfield Terrace, asking me to put my name down to the Ballantyne Memorial Committee. I have sent him a pretty sharp answer in favour of cutting down the memorial and giving more to the widow and children. If there is to be any foolery in the way of statues or other trash, please send them a guinea; but if they are going to take my advice and put up a simple tablet with a few heartfelt words, and really devote the bulk of the subscriptions to the wife and family, I will go to the length of twenty pounds, if you will allow me (and if the case of the family be at all urgent); and at least I direct you to send ten pounds. I suppose you had better see Scott Dalgleish himself on the matter. I take the opportunity here to warn you that my head is simply spinning with a multitude of affairs and I shall probably forget a half of my business at last.

R. L. S.

To Mrs. Sitwell

[*Vailima, April,* 1894]

My dear Friend,—I have at last got some photographs and hasten to send you, as you asked, a portrait of Tusitala. He is a strange person; not so lean, say experts, but infinitely battered; mighty active again on the whole; going up and down our breakneck road at all hours of the day and night on horseback; holding meetings with all manner of chiefs; quite a political personage—God save the mark!—in a small way, but at heart very conscious of the inevitable flat failure that awaits every one. I shall never do a better book than *Catriona,* that is my high-water mark, and the trouble of production increases on me at a great rate—and mighty anxious about how I am to leave my family: an elderly man, with elderly

pre-occupations, whom I should be ashamed to show you for your old friend; but not a hope of my dying soon and cleanly, and "winning off the stage." Rather I am daily better in physical health. I shall have to see this business out, after all; and I think, in that case, they should have—they might have—spared me all my ill-health this decade past, if it were not to unbar the doors. I have no taste for old age, and my nose is to be rubbed in it in spite of my face. I was meant to die young, and the gods do not love me.

This is very like an epitaph, bar the handwriting, which is anything but monumental, and I daresay I had better stop. Fanny is down at her own cottage planting or deplanting or replanting, I know not which, and she will not be home till dinner, by which time the mail will be all closed, else she would join me in all good messages and remembrances of love. I hope you will congratulate Burne-Jones from me on his baronetcy. I cannot make out to be anything but raspingly, harrowingly sad; so I will close, and not affect levity which I cannot feel. Do not altogether forget me; keep a corner of your memory for the exile

LOUIS.

To Charles Baxter

[*Vailima, May,* 1894]

MY DEAR CHARLES,—My dear fellow, I wish to assure you of the greatness of the pleasure that this Edinburgh Edition gives me. I suppose it was your idea to give it that name. No other would have affected me in the same manner. Do you remember, how many years ago—I would be afraid to hazard a guess—one night when I communicated to you certain intimations of early death and aspirations after fame? I was particularly maudlin; and my remorse the next morning on a review of my folly has written the matter very deeply in my mind; from yours it may easily have fled. If any one at that moment could have

shown me the Edinburgh Edition, I suppose I should have died. It is with gratitude and wonder that I consider "the way in which I have been led." Could a more preposterous idea have occurred to us in those days when we used to search our pockets for coppers, too often in vain, and combine forces to produce the threepence necessary for two glasses of beer, or wander down the Lothian Road without any, than that I should be strong and well at the age of forty-three in the island of Upolu, and that you should be at home bringing out the Edinburgh Edition? If it had been possible, I should almost have preferred the Lothian Road Edition, say, with a picture of the old Dutch smuggler on the covers. I have now something heavy on my mind. I had always a great sense of kinship with poor Robert Fergusson—so clever a boy, so wild, of such a mixed strain, so unfortunate, born in the same town with me, and, as I always felt, rather by express intimation than from evidence, so like myself. Now the injustice with which the one Robert is rewarded and the other left out in the cold sits heavy on me, and I wish you could think of some way in which I could do honour to my unfortunate namesake. Do you think it would look like affectation to dedicate the whole edition to his memory? I think it would. The sentiment which would dictate it to me is too abstruse; and besides, I think my wife is the proper person to receive the dedication of my life's work. At the same time, it is very odd—it really looks like the transmigration of souls—I feel that I must do something for Fergusson; Burns has been before me with the gravestone. It occurs to me you might take a walk down the Canongate and see in what condition the stone is. If it be at all uncared for, we might repair it, and perhaps add a few words of inscription.

I must tell you, what I just remembered in a flash as I was walking about dictating this letter—there was in the original plan of the *Master of Ballantrae* a sort of introduction describing my arrival in Edin-

burgh on a visit to yourself and your placing in my hands the papers of the story. I actually wrote it, and then condemned the idea—as being a little too like Scott, I suppose. Now I must really find the MS. and try to finish it for the E.E. It will give you, what I should so much like you to have, another corner of your own in that lofty monument.

Suppose we do what I have proposed about Fergusson's monument, I wonder if an inscription like this would look arrogant—

> This stone originally erected
> by Robert Burns has been
> repaired at the
> charges of Robert Louis Stevenson
> and is by him re-dedicated to
> the memory of Robert Fergusson,
> as the gift of one Edinburgh
> lad to another.

In spacing this inscription I would detach the names of Fergusson and Burns, but leave mine in the text.

Or would that look like sham modesty, and is it better to bring out the three Roberts?

To Sidney Colvin

Vailima, May 18th, 1894

My dear Colvin,—Your proposals for the Edinburgh Edition are entirely to my mind. About the *Amateur Emigrant,* it shall go to you by this mail well slashed. If you like to slash some more on your own account, I give you permission. 'Tis not a great work; but since it goes to make up the two first volumes as proposed, I presume it has not been written in vain.*—

* The suppressed first part of the *Amateur Emigrant,* written in San Francisco in 1879, which it was proposed now to condense, and to some extent recast, for the Edinburgh Edition.

Miscellanies. I see with some alarm the proposal to print *Juvenilia;* does it not seem to you taking myself a little too much as Grandfather William? I am certainly not so young as I once was—a lady took occasion to remind me of the fact no later agone than last night. "Why don't you leave that to the young men, Mr. Stevenson?" said she—but when I remember that I felt indignant at even John Ruskin when he did something of the kind I really feel myself blush from head to heel. If you want to make up the first volume, there are a good many works which I took the trouble to prepare for publication and which have never been republished. In addition to *Roads* and *Dancing Children,* referred to by you, there is *An Autumn Effect* in the *Portfolio,* and a paper on Fontainebleau—*Forest Notes* is the name of it—in *Cornhill.* I have no objection to any of these being edited, say with a scythe, and reproduced. But I heartily abominate and reject the idea of reprinting *The Pentland Rising.* For God's sake let me get buried first.

Tales and Fantasies. Vols. I. and II. have my hearty approval. But I think III. and IV. had better be crammed into one as you suggest. I will reprint none of the stories mentioned. They are below the mark. Well, I daresay the beastly *Body-Snatcher* has merit, and I am unjust to it from my recollections of the *Pall Mall.* But the other two won't do. For vols. V. and VI., now changed into IV. and V., I propose the common title of *South Sea Yarns.* There! These are all my differences of opinion. I agree with every detail of your arrangement, and, as you see, my objections have turned principally on the question of hawking unripe fruit. I daresay it is all pretty green, but that is no reason for us to fill the barrow with trash. Think of having a new set of type cast, paper especially made, etc., in order to set up rubbish that is not fit for the *Saturday Scotsman.* It would be the climax of shame.

I am sending you a lot of verses, which had best,

I think, be called *Underwoods* Book III., but in what order are they to go? Also, I am going on every day a little, till I get sick of it, with the attempt to get *The Emigrant* compressed into life; I know I can—or you can after me—do it. It is only a question of time and prayer and ink, and should leave something, no, not good, but not all bad—a very genuine appreciation of these folks. You are to remember besides there is that paper of mine on Bunyan in the *Magazine of Art*. O, and then there's another thing in *Seeley** called some spewsome name, I cannot recall it.

Well—come, here goes for *Juvenilia. Dancing Infants, Roads, An Autumn Effect, Forest Notes* (but this should come at the end of them, as it's really rather riper), t'other thing from Seeley, and I'll tell you, you may put in my letter to the Church of Scotland—it's not written amiss, and I daresay *The Philosophy of Umbrellas* might go in, but there I stick—and remember *that* was a collaboration with James Walter Ferrier. O, and there was a little skit called *The Charity Bazaar,* which you might see; I don't think it would do. Now, I do not think there are two other words that should be printed.—By the way, there is an article of mine called *The Day after To-morrow* in the *Contemporary* which you might find room for somewhere; it's no' bad.

Very busy with all these affairs and some native ones also.

To R. A. M. Stevenson

[*Vailima, June 17th,* 1894]

My dear Bob,—I must make out a letter this mail or perish in the attempt. All the same, I am deeply stupid, in bed with a cold, deprived of my amanuensis, and conscious of the wish but not the furnished will.

* This means *The Portfolio*, of which Mr. Richmond Seeley was the publisher and (after Mr. P. G. Hamerton) editor.

You may be interested to hear how the family inquiries go. It is now quite certain that we are a second-rate lot, and came out of Cunningham or Clydesdale, therefore *British* folk; so that you are Cymry on both sides, and I Cymry and Pict. We may have fought with King Arthur and known Merlin. The first of the family, Stevenson of Stevenson, was quite a great party, and dates back to the wars of Edward First. The last male heir of Stevenson of Stevenson died 1670, £220, 10s. to the bad, from drink. About the same time the Stevensons, who were mostly in Cunningham before, crop up suddenly in the parish of Neilston, over the border in Renfrewshire. Of course, they may have been there before, but there is no word of them in that parish till 1675 in any extracts I have. Our first traceable ancestor was a tenant farmer of Mure of Cauldwells—James in Nether Carsewell. Presently two families of maltmen are found in Glasgow, both, by reduplicated proofs, related to James (the son of James) in Nether Carsewell. We descend by his second marriage from Robert; one of these died 1733. It is not very romantic up to now, but has interested me surprisingly to fish out, always hoping for more—and occasionally getting at least a little clearness and confirmation. But the earliest date, 1655, apparently the marriage of James in Nether Carsewell, cannot as yet be pushed back. From which of any number of dozen little families in Cunningham we should derive, God knows! Of course, it doesn't matter a hundred years hence, an argument fatal to all human enterprise, industry, or pleasure. And to me it will be a deadly disappointment if I cannot roll this stone away! One generation further might be nothing, but it is my present object of desire, and we are so near it! There is a man in the same parish called Constantine; if I could only trace to him I could take you far afield by that one talisman of the strange Christian name of Constantine. But no such luck! And I kind of fear we shall stick at James.

I. James, a tenant of the Mures, in Nether Carsewell, Neilston, married (1665?) Jean Keir.

II. Robert (Maltman in Glasgow), died 1733, married 1st ; married second, Elizabeth Cumming.

William (Maltman in Glasgow),

Robert, Marion, Elizabeth.

III. Robert (Maltman in Glasgow), married Margaret Fulton (had a large family).

IV. Alan, West India merchant, married Jean Lillie.

V. Robert, married Jean Smith.

VI. Alan.—Margaret Jones.

VII. R. A. M. S.

Note. — Between 1730–1766 flourished in Glasgow Alan the Coppersmith, who acts as a kind of a pin to the whole Stevenson system there. He was caution to Robert the Second's will, and to William's will, and to the will of a John, another maltman.

So much, though all inchoate, I trouble you with, knowing that you, at least, must take an interest in it. So much is certain of that strange Celtic descent, that the past has an interest for it apparently gratuitous, but fiercely strong. I wish to trace my ancestors a thousand years, if I trace them by gallowses. It is not love, not pride, not admiration; it is an expansion of the identity, intimately pleasing, and wholly uncritical; I can expend myself in the person of an inglorious ancestor with perfect comfort; or a disgraced, if I could find one. I suppose, perhaps, it is more to me who am childless, and refrain with a certain shock from looking forwards. But, I am sure, in the solid grounds of race, that you have it also in some degree.

Enough genealogy. I do not know if you will be able to read my hand. Unhappily, Belle, who is my

amanuensis, is out of the way on other affairs, and I have to make the unwelcome effort. (O this is beautiful, I am quite pleased with myself.) Graham has just arrived last night (my mother is coming by the other steamer in three days), and has told me of your meeting, and he said you looked a little older than I did; so that I suppose we keep step fairly on the downward side of the hill. He thought you looked harassed, and I could imagine that too. I sometimes feel harassed. I have a great family here about me, a great anxiety. The loss (to use my grandfather's expression), the "loss" of our family is that we are disbelievers in the morrow—perhaps I should say, rather, in next year. The future is *always* black to us; it was to Robert Stevenson; to Thomas; I suspect to Alan; to R. A. M. S. it was so almost to his ruin in youth; to R. L. S., who had a hard hopeful strain in him from his mother, it was not so much so once, but becomes daily more so. Daily so much more so, that I have a painful difficulty in believing I can ever finish another book, or that the public will ever read it.

I have so huge a desire to know exactly what you are doing, that I suppose I should tell you what I am doing by way of an example. I have a room now, a part of the twelve-foot verandah sparred in, at the most inaccessible end of the house. Daily I see the sunrise out of my bed, which I still value as a tonic, a perpetual tuning fork, a look of God's face once in the day. At six my breakfast comes up to me here, and I work till eleven. If I am quite well, I sometimes go out and bathe in the river before lunch, twelve. In the afternoon I generally work again, now alone drafting, now with Belle dictating. Dinner is at six, and I am often in bed by eight. This is supposing me to stay at home. But I must often be away, sometimes all day long, sometimes till twelve, one, or two at night, when you might see me coming home to the sleeping house, sometimes in a trackless darkness,

sometimes with a glorious tropic moon, everything drenched with dew—unsaddling and creeping to bed; and you would no longer be surprised that I live out in this country, and not in Bournemouth—in bed.

My great recent interruptions have (as you know) come from politics; not much in my line, you will say. But it is impossible to live here and not feel very sorely the consequences of the horrid white mismanagement. I tried standing by and looking on, and it became too much for me. They are such illogical fools; a logical fool in an office, with a lot of red tape, is conceivable. Furthermore, he is as much as we have any reason to expect of officials—a thoroughly commonplace, unintellectual lot. But these people are wholly on wires; laying their ears down, skimming away, pausing as though shot, and presto! full spread on the other tack. I observe in the official class mostly an insane jealousy of the smallest kind, as compared to which the artist's is of a grave, modest character—the actor's, even; a desire to extend his little authority, and to relish it like a glass of wine, that is *impayable.* Sometimes, when I see one of these little kings strutting over one of his victories—wholly illegal, perhaps, and certain to be reversed to his shame if his superiors ever heard of it—I could weep. The strange thing is that they *have nothing else.* I auscultate them in vain; no real sense of duty, no real comprehension, no real attempt to comprehend, no wish for information—you cannot offend one of them more bitterly than by offering information, though it is certain that you have *more,* and obvious that you have *other,* information than they have; and talking of policy, they could not play a better stroke than by listening to you, and it need by no means influence their action. *Tenez,* you know what a French post office or railway official is? That is the diplomatic card to the life. Dickens is not in it; caricature fails.

All this keeps me from my work, and gives me the unpleasant side of the world. When your letters are

disbelieved it makes you angry, and that is rot; and I wish I could keep out of it with all my soul. But I have just got into it again, and farewell peace!

My work goes along but slowly. I have got to a crossing place, I suppose; the present book, *St. Ives*, is nothing; it is in no style in particular, a tissue of adventures, the central character not very well done, no philosophic pith under the yarn; and, in short, if people will read it, that's all I ask; and if they won't, damn them! I like doing it though; and if you ask me why! After that I am on *Weir of Hermiston* and *Heathercat*, two Scotch stories, which will either be something different, or I shall have failed. The first is generally designed, and is a private story of two or three characters in a very grim vein. The second—alas! the thought—is an attempt at a real historical novel, to present a whole field of time; the race—our own race—the west land and Clydesdale blue bonnets, under the influence of their last trial, when they got to a pitch of organisation in madness that no other peasantry has ever made an offer at. I was going to call it *The Killing Time*, but this man Crockett has forestalled me in that. Well, it'll be a big smash if I fail in it; but a gallant attempt. All my weary reading as a boy, which you remember well enough, will come to bear on it; and if my mind will keep up to the point it was in a while back, perhaps I can pull it through.

For two months past, Fanny, Belle, Austin (her child), and I have been alone; but yesterday, as I mentioned, Graham Balfour arrived, and on Wednesday my mother and Lloyd will make up the party to its full strength. I wish you could drop in for a month or a week, or two hours. That is my chief want. On the whole, it is an unexpectedly pleasant corner I have dropped into for an end of it, which I could scarcely have foreseen from Wilson's shop, or the Princes Street Gardens, or the Portobello Road. Still, I would like to hear what my *alter ego* thought of it; and I would

sometimes like to have my old *maître-ès-arts* express an opinion on what I do. I put this very tamely, being on the whole a quiet elderly man; but it is a strong passion with me, though intermittent. Now, try to follow my example and tell me something about yourself, Louisa, the Bab, and your work; and kindly send me some specimens of what you're about. I have only seen one thing by you, about Notre Dame in the *Westminster* or *St. James's*, since I left England, now I suppose six years ago.

I have looked this trash over, and it is not at all the letter I wanted to write—not truck about officials, ancestors, and the like rancidness—but you have to let your pen go in its own broken-down gait, like an old butcher's pony, stop when it pleases, and go on again as it will.—Ever, my dear Bob, your affectionate cousin, R. L. Stevenson.

To Sidney Colvin

Vailima, June 18th, '94

My dear Colvin,—You are to please understand that my last letter is withdrawn unconditionally. You and Baxter are having all the trouble of this edition, and I simply put myself in your hands for you to do what you like with me, and I am sure that will be the best, at any rate. Hence you are to conceive me withdrawing all objections to your printing anything you please. After all, it is a sort of family affair. About the Miscellany Section, both plans seem to me quite good. Toss up. I think the *Old Gardener* has to stay where I put him last. It would not do to separate John and Robert.

In short, I am only sorry I ever uttered a word about the edition, and leave you to be the judge. I have had a vile cold which has prostrated me for more than a fortnight, and even now tears me nightly with spasmodic coughs; but it has been a great victory. I have

never borne a cold with so little hurt; wait till the clouds blow by, before you begin to boast! I have had no fever; and though I've been very unhappy, it is nigh over, I think. Of course, *St. Ives* has paid the penalty. I must not let you be disappointed in *St. I.* It is a mere tissue of adventures; the central figure not very well or very sharply drawn; no philosophy, no destiny, to it; some of the happenings very good in themselves, I believe, but none of them *bildende,* none of them constructive, except in so far perhaps as they make up a kind of sham picture of the time, all in italics and all out of drawing. Here and there, I think, it is well written; and here and there it's not. Some of the episodic characters are amusing, I do believe; others not, I suppose. However, they are the best of the thing such as it is. If it has a merit to it, I should say it was a sort of deliberation and swing to the style, which seems to me to suit the mail-coaches and post-chaises with which it sounds all through. 'Tis my most prosaic book.

I called on the two German ships now in port, and we are quite friendly with them, and intensely friendly of course with our own *Curaçoas.* But it is other guess work on the beach. Some one has employed, or subsidised, one of the local editors to attack me once a week. He is pretty scurrilous and pretty false. The first effect of the perusal of the weekly Beast is to make me angry; the second is a kind of deep, golden content and glory, when I seem to say to people: "See! this is my position—I am a plain man dwelling in the bush in a house, and behold they have to get up this kind of truck against me—and I have so much influence that they are obliged to write a weekly article to say I have none."

By this time you must have seen Lysaght and forgiven me the letter that came not at all. He was really so nice a fellow—he had so much to tell me of Meredith —and the time was so short—that I gave up the intervening days between mails entirely to entertain him.

We go on pretty nicely. Fanny, Belle, and I have had two months alone, and it has been very pleasant. But by to-morrow or next day noon, we shall see the whole clan assembled again about Vailima table, which will be pleasant too; seven persons in all, and the Babel of voices will be heard again in the big hall so long empty and silent. Good-bye. Love to all. Time to close.—Yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Henry James

Vailima, July 7th, 1894

Dear Henry James,—I am going to try and dictate to you a letter or a note, and begin the same without any spark of hope, my mind being entirely in abeyance. This malady is very bitter on the literary man. I have had it now coming on for a month, and it seems to get worse instead of better. If it should prove to be softening of the brain, a melancholy interest will attach to the present document. I heard a great deal about you from my mother and Graham Balfour; the latter declares that you could take a First in any Samoan subject. If that be so, I should like to hear you on the theory of the constitution. Also to consult you on the force of the particles *o lo'o* and *ua*, which are the subject of a dispute among local pundits. You might, if you ever answer this, give me your opinion on the origin of the Samoan race, just to complete the favour.

They both say that you are looking well, and I suppose I may conclude from that that you are feeling passably. I wish I was. Do not suppose from this that I am ill in body; it is the numskull that I complain of. And when that is wrong, as you must be very keenly aware, you begin every day with a smarting disappointment, which is not good for the temper. I am in one of the humours when a man wonders how any one can be such an ass as to embrace the profes-

sion of letters, and not get apprenticed to a barber or keep a baked-potato stall. But I have no doubt in the course of a week, or perhaps to-morrow, things will look better.

We have at present in port the model war-ship of Great Britain. She is called the *Curaçoa*, and has the nicest set of officers and men conceivable. They, the officers, are all very intimate with us, and the front verandah is known as the Curaçoa Club, and the road up to Vailima is known as the Curaçoa Track. It was rather a surprise to me; many naval officers have I known, and somehow had not learned to think entirely well of them, and perhaps sometimes ask myself a little uneasily how that kind of men could do great actions? and behold! the answer comes to me, and I see a ship that I would guarantee to go anywhere it was possible for men to go, and accomplish anything it was permitted man to attempt. I had a cruise on board of her not long ago to Manu'a, and was delighted. The good-will of all on board; the grim playfulness of * quarters, with the wounded falling down at the word; the ambulances hastening up and carrying them away; the Captain suddenly crying, "Fire in the wardroom!" and the squad hastening forward with the hose; and, last and most curious spectacle of all, all the men in their dust-coloured fatigue clothes, at a note of the bugle, falling simultaneously flat on deck, and the ship proceeding with its prostrate crew—*quasi* to ram an enemy; our dinner at night in a wild open anchorage, the ship rolling almost to her gunwales, and showing us alternately her bulwarks up in the sky, and then the wild broken cliffy palm-crested shores of the island with the surf thundering and leaping close aboard. We had the ward-room mess on deck, lit by pink wax tapers, everybody, of course, in uniform but myself, and the first lieutenant (who is a rheumaticky body) wrapped in a boat cloak. Gradually the sunset faded out, the island disappeared from the

* Word omitted in MS.

eye, though it remained menacingly present to the ear with the voice of the surf, and then the captain turned on the searchlight and gave us the coast, the beach, the trees, the native houses, and the cliffs by glimpses of daylight, a kind of deliberate lightning. About which time, I suppose, we must have come as far as the dessert, and were probably drinking our first glass of port to her Majesty. We stayed two days at the island, and had, in addition, a very picturesque snapshot at the native life. The three islands of Manu'a are independent, and are ruled over by a little slip of a half-caste girl about twenty, who sits all day in a pink gown, in a little white European house with about a quarter of an acre of roses in front of it, looking at the palm-trees on the village street, and listening to the surf. This, so far as I could discover, was all she had to do. "This is a very dull place," she said. It appears she could go to no other village for fear of raising the jealousy of her own people in the capital. And as for going about "tafatafaoing," as we say here, its cost was too enormous. A strong able-bodied native must walk in front of her and blow the conch shell continuously from the moment she leaves one house until the moment she enters another. Did you ever blow the conch shell? I presume not; but the sweat literally hailed off that man, and I expected every moment to see him burst a blood-vessel. We were entertained to kava in the guest-house with some very original features. The young men who run for the kava have a right to misconduct themselves *ad libitum* on the way back; and though they were told to restrain themselves on the occasion of our visit, there was a strange hurly-burly at their return, when they came beating the trees and the posts of the houses, leaping, shouting, and yelling like Bacchants.

I tasted on that occasion what it is to be great. My name was called next after the captain's, and several chiefs (a thing quite new to me, and not at all Samoan practice) drank to me by name.

And now, if you are not sick of the *Curaçoa* and Manu'a, I am, at least on paper. And I decline any longer to give you examples of how not to write.

By the by, you sent me long ago a work of Anatole France, which I confess I did not *taste*. Since then I have made the acquaintance of the *Abbé Coignard*, and have become a faithful adorer. I don't think a better book was ever written.

And I have no idea what I have said, and I have no idea what I ought to have said, and I am a total ass, but my heart is in the right place, and I am, my dear Henry James, yours,

R. L. S.

To Marcel Schwob

Vailima, Upolu, Samoa, July 7, 1894

Dear Mr. Marcel Schwob,—Thank you for having remembered me in my exile. I have read *Mimes* twice as a whole; and now, as I write, I am reading it again as it were by accident, and a piece at a time, my eye catching a word and travelling obediently on through the whole number. It is a graceful book, essentially graceful, with its haunting agreeable melancholy, its pleasing savour of antiquity. At the same time, by its merits, it shows itself rather as the promise of something else to come than a thing final in itself. You have yet to give us—and I am expecting it with impatience—something of a larger gait; something daylit, not twilit; something with the colours of life; not the flat tints of a temple illumination; something that shall be *said* with all the clearnesses and the trivialities of speech, not *sung* like a semi-articulate lullaby. It will not please yourself as well, when you come to give it us, but it will please others better. It will be more of a whole, more worldly, more nourished, more commonplace—and not so pretty, perhaps not even so beautiful. No man knows better than I that, as we go on in life, we must part from prettiness and the graces. We

but attain qualities to lose them; life is a series of farewells, even in art; even our proficiencies are deciduous and evanescent. So here with these exquisite pieces the XVIIth, XVIIIth, and IVth of the present collection. You will perhaps never excel them; I should think the "Hermes," never. Well, you will do something else, and of that I am in expectation.—Yours cordially, ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To AUGUSTUS ST. GAUDENS

Vailima, Samoa, July 8th, 1894

MY DEAR ST. GAUDENS,—This is to tell you that the medallion has been at last triumphantly transported up the hill and placed over my smoking-room mantelpiece. It is considered by everybody a first-rate but flattering portrait. We have it in a very good light, which brings out the artistic merits of the god-like sculptor to great advantage. As for my own opinion, I believe it to be a speaking likeness, and not flattered at all; possibly a little the reverse. The verses (curse the rhyme) look remarkably well.

Please do not longer delay, but send me an account for the expense of the gilt letters. I was sorry indeed that they proved beyond the means of a small farmer. —Yours very sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To MISS ADELAIDE BOODLE

Vailima, July 14, 1894

MY DEAR ADELAIDE,— . . . So, at last, you are going into mission work? where I think your heart always was. You will like it in a way, but remember it is dreary long. Do you know the story of the American tramp who was offered meals and a day's wage to chop with the back of an axe on a fallen trunk? "Damned

if I can go on chopping when I can't see the chips fly!" You will never see the chips fly in mission work, never; and be sure you know it beforehand. The work is one long dull disappointment, varied by acute revulsions; and those who are by nature courageous and cheerful, and have grown old in experience, learn to rub their hands over infinitesimal successes. However, as I really believe there is some good done in the long run—*gutta cavat lapidem non vi* in this business—it is a useful and honourable career in which no one should be ashamed to embark. Always remember the fable of the sun, the storm, and the traveller's cloak. Forget wholly and for ever all small pruderies, and remember that *you cannot change ancestral feelings of right and wrong without what is practically soul-murder.* Barbarous as the customs may seem, always bear them with patience, always judge them with gentleness, always find in them some seed of good; see that you always develop them; remember that all you can do is to civilise the man in the line of his own civilisation, such as it is. And never expect, never believe in, thaumaturgic conversions. They may do very well for St. Paul; in the case of an Andaman islander they mean less than nothing. In fact what you have to do is to teach the parents in the interests of their great-grandchildren.

Now, my dear Adelaide, dismiss from your mind the least idea of fault upon your side; nothing is further from the fact. I cannot forgive you, for I do not know your fault. My own is plain enough, and the name of it is cold-hearted neglect; and you may busy yourself more usefully in trying to forgive me. But ugly as my fault is, you must not suppose it to mean more than it does; it does not mean that we have at all forgotten you, that we have become at all indifferent to the thought of you. See, in my life of Jenkin, a remark of his, very well expressed, on the friendships of men who do not write to each other. I can honestly say that I have not changed to you in any way; though I have behaved thus ill, thus cruelly. Evil is done by

want of—well, principally by want of industry. You can imagine what I would say (in a novel) of any one who had behaved as I have done. *Deteriora sequor.* And you must somehow manage to forgive your old friend; and if you will be so very good, continue to give us news of you, and let us share the knowledge of your adventures, sure that it will be always followed with interest—even if it is answered with the silence of ingratitude. For I am not a fool; I know my faults, I know they are ineluctable, I know they are growing on me. I know I may offend again, and I warn you of it. But the next time I offend, tell me so plainly and frankly like a lady, and don't lacerate my heart and bludgeon my vanity with imaginary faults of your own and purely gratuitous penance. I might suspect you of irony!

We are all fairly well, though I have been off work and off—as you know very well—letter-writing. Yet I have sometimes more than twenty letters, and sometimes more than thirty, going out each mail. And Fanny has had a most distressing bronchitis for some time, which she is only now beginning to get over. I have just been to see her; she is lying—though she had breakfast an hour ago, about seven—in her big, cool, mosquito-proof room, ingloriously asleep. As for me, you see that a doom has come upon me; I cannot make marks with a pen—witness " ingloriously " above; and my Amanuensis not appearing so early in the day, for she is then immersed in household affairs, and I can hear her " steering the boys " up and down the verandahs—you must decipher this unhappy letter for yourself and, I fully admit, with everything against you. A letter should always be well written; how much more a letter of apology! Legibility is the politeness of men of letters, as punctuality of kings and beggars. By the punctuality of my replies, and the beauty of my handwriting, judge what a fine conscience I must have!

Now, my dear gamekeeper, I must really draw to a

close. For I have much else to write before the mail goes out three days hence. Fanny being asleep, it would not be conscientious to invent a message from her, so you must just imagine her sentiments. I find I have not the heart to speak of your recent loss. You remember perhaps, when my father died, you told me those ugly images of sickness, decline, and impaired reason, which then haunted me day and night, would pass away and be succeeded by things more happily characteristic. I have found it so. He now haunts me, strangely enough, in two guises: as a man of fifty, lying on a hillside and carving mottoes on a stick, strong and well; and as a younger man, running down the sands into the sea near North Berwick, myself—*ætat.* 11—somewhat horrified at finding him so beautiful when stripped! I hand on your own advice to you in case you have forgotten it, as I know one is apt to do in seasons of bereavement.—Ever yours, with much love and sympathy,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Mrs. A. Baker

This refers again to the printing of some of his books in Braille type for the blind.

Vailima, Samoa, July 16, 1894

DEAR MRS. BAKER,—I am very much obliged to you for your letter and the enclosure from Mr. Skinner. Mr. Skinner says he "thinks Mr. Stevenson must be a very kind man"; he little knows me. But I am very sure of one thing, that you are a very kind woman. I envy you—my Amanuensis being called away, I continue in my own hand, or what is left of it—unusually legible, I am thankful to see—I envy you your beautiful choice of an employment. There must be no regrets at least for a day so spent; and when the night falls you need ask no blessing on your work. "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of these."—Yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Sidney Colvin

July, 1894

My dear Colvin,—I have to thank you this time for a very good letter, and will announce for the future, though I cannot now begin to put in practice, good intentions for our correspondence. I will try to return to the old system and write from time to time during the month; but truly you did not much encourage me to continue! However, that is all by-past. I do not know that there is much in your letter that calls for answer. Your questions about *St. Ives* were practically answered in my last; so were your wails about the edition, *Amateur Emigrant*, etc. By the end of the year *St. I.* will be practically finished, whatever it be worth, and that I know not. When shall I receive proofs of the *Magnum Opus?* or shall I receive them at all?

The return of the Amanuensis feebly lightens my heart. You can see the heavy weather I was making of it with my unaided pen. The last month has been particularly cheery largely owing to the presence of our good friends the Curaçoas. She is really a model ship, charming officers and charming seamen. They gave a ball last month, which was very rackety and joyous and naval. . . .

On the following day, about one o'clock, three horsemen might have been observed approaching Vailima, who gradually resolved themselves into two petty officers and a native guide. Drawing himself up and saluting, the spokesman (a corporal of Marines) addressed me thus: "Me and my shipmates inwites Mr. and Mrs. Stevens, Mrs. Strong, Mr. Austin, and Mr. Balfour to a ball to be given to-night in the self-same 'all." It was of course impossible to refuse, though I contented myself with putting in a very brief appearance. One glance was sufficient; the ball went off like a rocket from the start. I had only time to watch Belle careering around with a gallant blue-jacket of exactly

her own height—the standard of the British navy—an excellent dancer and conspicuously full of small-talk —and to hear a remark from a beach-comber, "It's a nice sight this some way, to see the officers dancing like this with the men, but I tell you, sir, these are the men that'll fight together!"

I tell you, Colvin, the acquaintance of the men—and boys—makes me feel patriotic. Eeles in particular is a man whom I respect. I am half in a mind to give him a letter of introduction to you when he goes home. In case you feel inclined to make a little of him, give him a dinner, ask Henry James to come to meet him, etc.—You might let me know. I don't know that he would show his best, but he is a remarkably fine fellow, in every department of life.

We have other visitors in port. A Count Festetics de Solna, an Austrian officer, a very pleasant, simple, boyish creature, with his young wife, daughter of an American millionaire; he is a friend of our own Captain Wurmbrand, and it is a great pity Wurmbrand is away.

Glad you saw and liked Lysaght. He has left in our house a most cheerful and pleasing memory, as a good, pleasant, brisk fellow with good health and brains, and who enjoys himself and makes other people happy. I am glad he gave you a good report of our surroundings and way of life; but I knew he would, for I believe he had a glorious time—and gave one.*

*I may be allowed to quote the following sentences from a letter of this gentleman written when the news of our friend's death reached England:—"So great was his power of winning love that though I knew him for less than a week I could have borne the loss of many a more intimate friend with less sorrow than Stevenson's. When I saw him, last Easter, there was no suggestion of failure of strength. After all I had heard of his delicacy I was astonished at his vigour. He was up at five, and at work soon after, and at eleven o'clock at night he was dancing on the floor of the big room while I played Scotch and Irish reels on the rickety piano. He would talk to me for hours of home and old friends, but with a wonderful cheerfulness, knowing himself banished from them for life and yet brought close to them by love. I confidently counted on his living; he took

I am on fair terms with the two Treaty officials though all such intimacies are precarious; with the consuls, I need not say, my position is deplorable. The President (Herr Emil Schmidt) is a rather dreamy man, whom I like. Lloyd, Graham, and I go to breakfast with him to-morrow; the next day the whole party of us lunch on the *Curaçoa* and go in the evening to a *Bierabend* at Dr. Funk's. We are getting up a paper-chase for the following week with some of the young German clerks, and have in view a sort of child's party for grown-up persons with kissing games, etc., here at Vailima. Such is the gay scene in which we move. Now I have done something, though not as much as I wanted, to give you an idea of how we are getting on, and I am keenly conscious that there are other letters to do before the mail goes.—Yours ever,

R. L. Stevenson.

To J. M. Barrie

Vailima, July 13, 1894

My dear Barrie,—This is the last effort of an ulcerated conscience. I have been so long owing you a letter, I have heard so much of you, fresh from the press, from my mother and Graham Balfour, that I have to write a letter no later than to-day, or perish in my shame. But the deuce of it is, my dear fellow, that you write such a very good letter that I am ashamed to exhibit myself before my junior (which you are, after all) in the light of the dreary idiot I feel. Understand that there will be nothing funny in the following pages. If I can manage to be rationally coherent, I shall be more than satisfied.

In the first place, I have had the extreme satisfaction to be shown that photograph of your mother. It bears

keen interest in my own poor work, and it was one of my ambitions to send him a book some day which would better deserve his attention."

evident traces of the hand of an amateur. How is it that amateurs invariably take better photographs than professionals? I must qualify invariably. My own negatives have always represented a province of chaos and old night in which you might dimly perceive fleecy spots of twilight representing nothing; so that, if I am right in supposing the portrait of your mother to be yours, I must salute you as my superior. Is that your mother's breakfast? Or is it only afternoon tea? If the first, do let me recommend to Mrs. Barrie to add an egg to her ordinary. Which, if you please, I will ask her to eat to the honour of her son, and I am sure she will live much longer for it, to enjoy his fresh successes. I never in my life saw anything more deliciously characteristic. I declare I can hear her speak. I wonder my mother could resist the temptation of your proposed visit to Kirriemuir, which it was like your kindness to propose. By the way, I was twice in Kirriemuir, I believe in the year '71, when I was going on a visit to Glenogil. It was Kirriemuir, was it not? I have a distinct recollection of an inn at the end—I think the upper end—of an irregular open place or square, in which I always see your characters evolve. But, indeed, I did not pay much attention; being all bent upon my visit to a shooting-box, where I should fish a real trout-stream, and I believe preserved. I did, too, and it was a charming stream, clear as crystal, without a trace of peat—a strange thing in Scotland —and alive with trout; the name of it I cannot remember, it was something like the Queen's River, and in some hazy way connected with memories of Mary Queen of Scots. It formed an epoch in my life, being the end of all my trout-fishing. I had always been accustomed to pause and very laboriously to kill every fish as I took it. But in the Queen's River I took so good a basket that I forgot these niceties; and when I sat down, in a hard rain shower, under a bank, to take my sandwiches and sherry, lo! and behold, there was the basketful of trouts still kicking in their agony.

I had a very unpleasant conversation with my conscience. All that afternoon I persevered in fishing, brought home my basket in triumph, and sometime that night, "in the wee sma' hours ayont the twal," I finally forswore the gentle craft of fishing. I daresay your local knowledge may identify this historic river; I wish it could go farther and identify also that particular Free kirk in which I sat and groaned on Sunday. While my hand is in I must tell you a story. At that antique epoch you must not fall into the vulgar error that I was myself ancient. I was, on the contrary, very young, very green, and (what you will appreciate, Mr. Barrie) very shy. There came one day to lunch at the house two very formidable old ladies—or one very formidable, and the other what you please—answering to the honoured and historic name of the Miss C—— A——'s of Balnamoon. At table I was exceedingly funny, and entertained the company with tales of geese and bubbly-jocks. I was great in the expression of my terror for these bipeds, and suddenly this horrid, severe, and eminently matronly old lady put up a pair of gold eyeglasses, looked at me awhile in silence, and pronounced in a clangorous voice her verdict. "You give me very much the effect of a coward, Mr. Stevenson!" I had very nearly left two vices behind me at Glenogil—fishing and jesting at table. And of one thing you may be very sure, my lips were no more opened at that meal.

July 29th.—No, Barrie, 'tis in vain they try to alarm me with their bulletins. No doubt you're ill, and unco ill, I believe; but I have been so often in the same case that I know pleurisy and pneumonia are in vain against Scotsmen who can write. (I once could.) You cannot imagine probably how near me this common calamity brings you. *Ce que j'ai toussé dans ma vie!* How often and how long have I been on the rack at night and learned to appreciate that noble passage in the Psalms when somebody or other is said to be more set on something than they "who dig for hid treasures—

yea, than those who long for the morning"—for all the world, as you have been racked and you have longed. Keep your heart up, and you'll do. Tell that to your mother, if you are still in any danger or suffering. And by the way, if you are at all like me—and I tell myself you are very like me—be sure that there is only one thing good for you, and that is the sea in hot climates. Mount, sir, into "a little frigot" of 5000 tons or so, and steer peremptorily for the tropics; and what if the ancient mariner, who guides your frigot, should startle the silence of the ocean with the cry of land ho!—say, when the day is dawning—and you should see the turquoise mountain tops of Upolu coming hand over fist above the horizon? Mr. Barrie, sir, 'tis then there would be larks! And though I cannot be certain that our climate would suit you (for it does not suit some), I am sure as death the voyage would do you good—would do you *Best*—and if Samoa didn't do, you needn't stay beyond the month, and I should have had another pleasure in my life, which is a serious consideration for me. I take this as the hand of the Lord preparing your way to Vailima—in the desert, certainly—in the desert of Cough and by the ghoul-haunted woodland of Fever—but whither that way points there can be no question—and there will be a meeting of the twa Hoasting Scots Makers in spite of fate, fortune? and the Devil. *Absit omen!*

My dear Barrie, I am a little in the dark about this new work of yours *: what is to become of me afterwards? You say carefully—methought anxiously—that I was no longer me when I grew up? I cannot bear this suspense: what is it? It's no forgery? And AM I HANGIT? These are the elements of a very pretty lawsuit which you had better come to Samoa to compromise. I am enjoying a great pleasure that I had long looked forward to, reading Orme's *History of*

* *Sentimental Tommy:* whose chief likeness to R. L. S. was meant to be in the literary temperament and passion for the *mot propre.*

Indostan; I had been looking out for it everywhere; but at last, in four volumes, large quarto, beautiful type and page, and with a delectable set of maps and plans, and all the names of the places wrongly spelled—it came to Samoa, little Barrie. I tell you frankly, you had better come soon. I am sair failed a'ready; and what I may be if you continue to dally, I dread to conceive. I may be speechless; already, or at least for a month or so, I'm little better than a teetoller—I beg pardon, a teetotaller. It is not exactly physical, for I am in good health, working four or five hours a day in my plantation, and intending to ride a paper-chase next Sunday—ay, man, that's a fact, and I havena had the hert to breathe it to my mother yet—the obligation's poleetical, for I am trying every means to live well with my German neighbours—and, O Barrie, but it's no' easy! . . . To be sure, there are many exceptions. And the whole of the above must be regarded as private—strictly private. Breathe it not in Kirriemuir: tell it not to the daughters of Dundee! What a nice extract this would make for the daily papers! and how it would facilitate my position here!

August 5th.—This is Sunday, the Lord's Day. "The hour of attack approaches." And it is a singular consideration what I risk; I may yet be the subject of a tract, and a good tract too—such as one which I remember reading with recreant awe and rising hair in my youth, of a boy who was a very good boy, and went to Sunday Schule, and one day kipped * from it, and went and actually bathed, and was dashed over a waterfall, and he was the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. A dangerous trade, that, and one that I have to practise. I'll put in a word when I get home again to tell you whether I'm killed or not. "Accident in the (Paper) Hunting Field: death of a notorious author. We deeply regret to announce the

*I can find no dictionary authority for a Scots verb to *kip*, meaning to play truant, but it seems as though R. L. S. must have had such a verb in his vocabulary.—S. C.

death of the most unpopular man in Samoa, who broke his neck at the descent of Magiagi, from the misconduct of his little raving lunatic of an old beast of a pony. It is proposed to commemorate the incident by the erection of a suitable pile. The design (by our local architect, Mr. Walker) is highly artificial, with a rich and voluminous Crockett at each corner, a small but impervious Barrièer at the entrance, an arch at the top, an Archer of a pleasing but solid character at the bottom; the colour will be genuine William-Black; and Lang, lang may the ladies sit wi' their fans in their hands." Well, well, they may sit as they sat for me, and little they'll reck, the ungrateful jauds! Muckle they cared about Tusitala when they had him! But now ye can see the difference; now, leddies, ye can repent, when ower late, o' your former cauldness and what ye'll perhaps allow me to ca' your *tepeedity!* He was beautiful as the day, but his day is done! And perhaps, as he was maybe gettin' a wee thing fly-blawn, it's nane too shüne.

Monday, August 6th.—Well, sir, I have escaped the dangerous conjunction of the widow's only son and the Sabbath Day. We had a most enjoyable time, and Lloyd and I were 3 and 4 to arrive; I will not tell here what interval had elapsed between our arrival and the arrival of 1 and 2; the question, sir, is otiose and malign; it deserves, it shall have no answer. And now without further delay to the main purpose of this hasty note. We received and we have already in fact distributed the gorgeous fahbrics of Kirriemuir. Whether from the splendour of the robes themselves, or from the direct nature of the compliments with which you had directed us to accompany the presentations, one young lady blushed as she received the proofs of your munificence. . . . Bad ink, and the dregs of it at that, but the heart in the right place. Still very cordially interested in my Barrie and wishing him well through his sickness, which is of the body, and long defended from mine, which is of the head, and by the impolite

might be described as idiocy. The whole head is useless, and the whole sitting part painful: reason, the recent paper-chase.

> There was racing and chasing in Vailele Plantation,
> And vastly we enjoyed it,
> But, alas! for the state of my foundation,
> For it wholly has destroyed it.

Come, my mind is looking up. The above is wholly impromptu.—On oath, TUSITALA.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

The missionary view of the Sunday paper-chase, with an account of Stevenson's apologies to the ladies and gentlemen of the mission was printed by Mr. W. E. Clarke in the *Chronicle* of the London Missionary Society for April and May, 1908.

[*Vailima*] *August 7th,* 1894

MY DEAR COLVIN,—This is to inform you, sir, that on Sunday last (and this is Tuesday) I attained my ideal here, and we had a paper-chase in Vailele Plantation, about 15 miles, I take it, from us; and it was all that could be wished. It is really better fun than following the hounds, since you have to be your own hound, and a precious bad hound I was, following every false scent on the whole course to the bitter end; but I came in 3rd at the last on my little Jack, who stuck to it gallantly, and awoke the praises of some discriminating persons. ($5 + 7 + 2\frac{1}{2} = 14\frac{1}{2}$ miles; yes, that is the count.) We had quite the old sensations of exhilaration, discovery, an appeal to a savage instinct; and I felt myself about 17 again, a pleasant experience. However, it was on the Sabbath Day, and I am now a pariah among the English, as if I needed any increment of unpopularity. I must not go again; it gives so much unnecessary tribulation to poor people, and, sure, we don't want to make tribulation. I have been forbidden to work, and have been instead doing my two or three hours in the plantation every morning.

I only wish somebody would pay me £10 a day for taking care of cacao, and I could leave literature to others. Certainly, if I have plenty of exercise, and no work, I feel much better; but there is Biles the butcher! him we have always with us.

I do not much like novels, I begin to think, but I am enjoying exceedingly Orme's *History of Indostan,* a lovely book in its way, in large quarto, with a quantity of maps, and written in a very lively and solid eighteenth century way, never picturesque except by accident and from a kind of conviction, and a fine sense of order. No historian I have ever read is so minute; yet he never gives you a word about the people; his interest is entirely limited in the concatenation of events, into which he goes with a lucid, almost superhuman, and wholly ghostly gusto. "By the ghost of a mathematician" the book might be announced. A very brave, honest book.

Your letter to hand.

Fact is, I don't like the picter.* O, it's a good picture, but if you *ask* me, you know, I believe, stoutly believe, that mankind, including you, are going mad. I am not in the midst with the other frenzy dancers, so I don't catch it wholly; and when you show me a thing—and ask me, don't you know—Well, well! Glad to get so good an account of the *Amateur Emigrant.* Talking of which, I am strong for making a volume out of selections from the South Sea letters; I read over again the King of Apemama, and it is good in spite of your teeth, and a real curiosity, a thing that can never be seen again, and the group is annexed and Tembinoka dead. I wonder, couldn't you send out to me the *first* five Butaritari letters and the Low Archipelago ones (both of which I have lost or mislaid), and I can chop out a perfectly fair volume of what I wish to be preserved. It can keep for the last of the series.

* A proposed frontispiece for one of the volumes of the Edinburgh Edition.

Travels and Excursions, vol. II. Should it not include a paper on S. F. from the *Mag. of Art?* The A. E., the New Pacific capital, the Old ditto, *Silver. Squat.* This would give all my works on the States; and though it ain't very good, it's not so very bad. *Travels and Excursions,* vol. III., to be these resuscitated letters—*Miscellanies,* vol. II.—*comme vous voudrez, cher monsieur!*

Monday, Aug. 13th.—I have a sudden call to go up the coast and must hurry up with my information. There has suddenly come to our naval commanders the need of action, they're away up the coast bombarding the Atua rebels. All morning on Saturday the sound of the bombardment of Luatuanu'u kept us uneasy. To-day again the big guns have been sounding farther along the coast. One delicious circumstance must not be forgotten. Our blessed President of the Council—a kind of hoary-headed urchin, with the dim, timid eyes of extreme childhood and a kind of beautiful simplicity that endears him to me beyond words—has taken the head of the army—honour to him for it, for his place is really there—and gone up the coast in the congenial company of his housekeeper, a woman coming on for sixty with whom he takes his walks abroad in the morning in his shirt-sleeves, whom he reads to at night (in a kind of Popular History of Germany) in the silence of the Presidential mansion, and with whom (and a couple of camp stools) he walked out last Sunday to behold the paper-chase. I cannot tell you how taken I am with this exploit of the President's and the housekeeper's. It is like Don Quixote, but infinitely superior. If I could only do it without offence, what a subject it would make!

To-morrow morning early I am off up the coast myself. Therefore you must allow me to break off here without further ceremony.—Yours ever,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Dr. Bakewell

The following is to a physician in Australia.

Vailima, August 7th, 1894

Dear Dr. Bakewell,—I am not more than human. I am more human than is wholly convenient, and your anecdote was welcome. What you say about *unwilling work*, my dear sir, is a consideration always present with me, and yet not easy to give its due weight to. You grow gradually into a certain income; without spending a penny more, with the same sense of restriction as before when you painfully scraped two hundred a year together, you find you have spent, and you cannot well stop spending, a far larger sum; and this expense can only be supported by a certain production. However, I am off work this month, and occupy myself instead in weeding my cacao, paperchases, and the like. I may tell you, my average of work in favourable circumstances is far greater than you suppose: from six o'clock till eleven at latest,* and often till twelve, and again in the afternoon from two to four. My hand is quite destroyed, as you may perceive, to-day to a really unusual extent. I can sometimes write a decent fist still; but I have just returned with my arms all stung from three hours' work in the cacao.—Yours, etc., R. L. S.

To James Payn

Vailima, Upolu, Samoa [*August* 11, 1894]

My dear James Payn,—I hear from Lang that you are unwell, and it reminds me of two circumstances: First, that it is a very long time since you had the exquisite pleasure of hearing from me; and second, that I have been very often unwell myself, and sometimes had to thank you for a grateful anodyne.

* *Sic:* query for "least"?

They are not good, the circumstances, to write an anodyne letter. The hills and my house at less than (boom) a minute's interval quake with thunder; and though I cannot hear that part of it, shells are falling thick into the fort of Luatuanu'u (boom). It is my friends of the *Curaçoa*, the *Falke* and the *Bussard* bombarding (after all these—boom—months) the rebels of Atua. (Boom-boom.) It is most distracting in itself; and the thought of the poor devils in their fort (boom) with their bits of rifles far from pleasant. (Boom-boom.) You can see how quick it goes, and I'll say no more about Mr. Bow-wow, only you must understand the perpetual accompaniment of this discomfortable sound, and make allowances for the value of my copy. It is odd, though, I can well remember, when the Franco-Prussian war began, and I was in Eilean Earraid, far enough from the sound of the loudest cannonade, I could *hear* the shots fired, and I felt the pang in my breast of a man struck. It was sometimes so distressing, so instant, that I lay in the heather on the top of the island, with my face hid, kicking my heels for agony. And now, when I can hear the actual concussion of the air and hills, when I *know* personally the people who stand exposed to it, I am able to go on *tant bien que mal* with a letter to James Payn! The blessings of age, though mighty small, are tangible. I have heard a great deal of them since I came into the world, and now that I begin to taste of them—well! But this is one, that people do get cured of the excess of sensibility; and I had as lief these people were shot at as myself—or almost, for then I should have some of the fun, such as it is.

You are to conceive me, then, sitting in my little gallery room, shaken by these continual spasms of cannon, and with my eye more or less singly fixed on the imaginary figure of my dear James Payn. I try to see him in bed; no go. I see him instead jumping up in his room in Waterloo Place (where *ex hypothesi* he is not), sitting on the table, drawing out a very black

briar-root pipe, and beginning to talk to a slim and ill-dressed visitor in a voice that is good to hear and with a smile that is pleasant to see. After a little more than half an hour, the voice that was ill to hear has ceased, the cannonade is over. And I am thinking how I can get an answering smile wafted over so many leagues of land and water, and can find no way.

I have always been a great visitor of the sick; and one of the sick I visited was W. E. Henley, which did not make very tedious visits, so I'll not get off much purgatory for them. That was in the Edinburgh Infirmary, the old one, the true one, with Georgius Secundus standing and pointing his toe in a niche of the façade; and a mighty fine building it was! And I remember one winter's afternoon, in that place of misery, that Henley and I chanced to fall in talk about James Payn himself. I am wishing you could have heard that talk! I think that would make you smile. We had mixed you up with John Payne, for one thing, and stood amazed at your extraordinary, even painful, versatility; and for another, we found ourselves each students so well prepared for examinations on the novels of the real Mackay. Perhaps, after all, this is worth something in life—to have given so much pleasure to a pair so different in every way as were Henley and I, and to be talked of with so much interest by two such (beg pardon) clever lads!

The cheerful Lang has neglected to tell me what is the matter with you; so, I'm sorry to say, I am cut off from all the customary consolations. I can't say, "Think how much worse it would be if you had a broken leg!" when you may have the crushing repartee up your sleeve, "But it is my leg that is broken." This is a pity. But there are consolations. You are an Englishman (I believe); you are a man of letters; you have never been made C.B.; your hair was not red; you have played cribbage and whist; you did not play either the fiddle or the banjo; you were never an æsthete; you never contributed to ——'s Journal; your

name is not Jabez Balfour; you are totally unconnected with the Army and Navy departments; I understand you to have lived within your income—why, cheer up! here are many legitimate causes of congratulation. I seem to be writing an obituary notice. *Absit omen!* But I feel very sure that these considerations will have done you more good than medicine.

By the by, did you ever play piquet? I have fallen a victim to this debilitating game. It is supposed to be scientific; God save the mark, what self-deceivers men are! It is distinctly less so than cribbage. But how fascinating! There is such material opulence about it, such vast ambitions may be realised—and are not; it may be called the Monte Cristo of games. And the thrill with which you take five cards partakes of the nature of lust—and you draw four sevens and a nine, and the seven and nine of a suit that you discarded, and O! but the world is a desert! You may see traces of discouragement in my letter: all due to piquet! There has been a disastrous turn of the luck against me; a month or two ago I was two thousand ahead; now, and for a week back, I have been anything from four thousand eight hundred to five thousand two hundred astern. If I have sixième, my beast of a partner has a septième; and if I have three aces, three kings, three queens, and three knaves (excuse the slight exaggeration), the devil holds quatorze of tens! —I remain, my dear James Payn, your sincere and obliged friend—old friend let me say,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

TO MISS MIDDLETON

A letter from the lady to whom this is addressed, and who had been a friend of the Stevenson family in Edinburgh, had called up some memories of a Skye terrier, Jura, of whom readers have heard something already.

Vailima, Samoa, September 9, 1894

DEAR MISS MIDDLETON,—Your letter has been like the drawing up of a curtain. Of course I remember you very well, and the Skye terrier to which you refer —a heavy, dull, fatted, graceless creature he grew up to be—was my own particular pet. It may amuse you, perhaps, as much as "The Inn" amused me, if I tell you what made this dog particularly mine. My father was the natural god of all the dogs in our house, and poor Jura took to him of course. Jura was stolen, and kept in prison somewhere for more than a week, as I remember. When he came back Smeoroch had come and taken my father's heart from him. He took his stand like a man, and positively never spoke to my father again from that day until the day of his death. It was the only sign of character he ever showed. I took him up to my room and to be my dog in consequence, partly because I was sorry for him, and partly because I admired his dignity in misfortune.

With best regards and thanks for having reminded me of so many pleasant days, old acquaintances, dead friends, and—what is perhaps as pathetic as any of them—dead dogs, I remain yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To A. CONAN DOYLE

The following refers to the papers originally contributed by various writers to Mr. Jerome's periodical, *The Idler,* under the title *My First Book,* and afterwards republished in a volume. The references towards the end are to the illustrations in the pages of *The Idler.*

Vailima, Samoa, September 9, 1894

MY DEAR CONAN DOYLE,—If you found anything to entertain you in my *Treasure Island* article, it may amuse you to know that you owe it entirely to yourself. *Your* "First Book" was by some accident read aloud one night in my Baronial 'All. I was consumedly

amused by it, so was the whole family, and we proceeded to hunt up back *Idlers* and read the whole series. It is a rattling good series, even people whom you would not expect came in quite the proper tone—Miss Braddon, for instance, who was really one of the best where all are good—or all but one! . . . In short, I fell in love with "The First Book" series, and determined that it should be all our first books, and that I could not hold back where the white plume of Conan Doyle waved gallantly in the front. I hope they will republish them, though it's a grievous thought to me that that effigy in the German cap—likewise the other effigy of the noisome old man with the long hair, telling indelicate stories to a couple of deformed negresses in a rancid shanty full of wreckage—should be perpetuated. I may seem to speak in pleasantry—it is only a seeming—that German cap, sir, would be found, when I come to die, imprinted on my heart. Enough—my heart is too full. Adieu.—Yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

(In a German cap, damn 'em!)

To SIDNEY COLVIN

[*Vailima, September*, 1894]

MY DEAR COLVIN,—This must be a very measly letter. I have been trying hard to get along with *St. Ives*. I should now lay it aside for a year and I daresay I should make something of it after all. Instead of that, I have to kick against the pricks, and break myself, and spoil the book, if there were anything to spoil, which I am far from saying. I'm sick of the thing as ever any one can be; it's a rudderless hulk; it's a pagoda, and you can just feel—or I can feel—that it might have been a pleasant story, if it had been only blessed at baptism.

Our politics have gone on fairly well, but the result is still doubtful.

Sept. 10*th.*—I know I have something else to say to you, but unfortunately I awoke this morning with collywobbles, and had to take a small dose of laudanum with the usual consequences of dry throat, intoxicated legs, partial madness, and total imbecility; and for the life of me I cannot remember what it is. I have likewise mislaid your letter amongst the accumulations on my table, not that there was anything in it. Altogether I am in a poor state. I forgot to tell Baxter that the dummy had turned up and is a fine, personable-looking volume and very good reading. Please communicate this to him.

I have just remembered an incident that I really must not let pass. You have heard a great deal more than you wanted about our political prisoners. Well, one day, about a fortnight ago, the last of them was set free—Old Poè, whom I think I must have mentioned to you, the father-in-law of my cook; he was one that I had had a great deal of trouble with. I had taken the doctor to see him, got him out on sick leave, and when he was put back again gave bail for him. I must not forget that my wife ran away with him out of the prison on the doctor's orders and with the complicity of our friend the gaoler, who really and truly got the sack for the exploit. As soon as he was finally liberated, Poè called a meeting of his fellow-prisoners. All Sunday they were debating what they were to do, and on Monday morning I got an obscure hint from Talolo that I must expect visitors during the day who were coming to consult me. These consultations I am now very well used to, and seeing first, that I generally don't know what to advise, and second that they sometimes don't take my advice—though in some notable cases they have taken it, generally to my own wonder with pretty good results—I am not very fond of these calls. They minister to a sense of dignity, but not peace of mind, and consume interminable time, always in the morning too, when I can't afford it. However, this was to be a new sort of con-

sultation. Up came Poè and some eight other chiefs, squatted in a big circle around the old dining-room floor, now the smoking-room. And the family, being represented by Lloyd, Graham, Belle, Austin and myself, proceeded to exchange the necessary courtesies. Then their Talking-Man began. He said that they had been in prison, that I had always taken an interest in them, that they had now been set at liberty without condition, whereas some of the other chiefs who had been liberated before them were still under bond to work upon the roads, and that this had set them considering what they might do to testify their gratitude. They had therefore agreed to work upon my road as a free gift. They went on to explain that it was only to be on my road, on the branch that joins my house with the public way.

Now I was very much gratified at this compliment, although (to one used to natives) it seemed rather a hollow one. It meant only that I should have to lay out a good deal of money on tools and food and to give wages under the guise of presents to some workmen who were most of them old and in ill-health. Conceive how much I was surprised and touched when I heard the whole scheme explained to me. They were to return to their provinces, and collect their families; some of the young men were to live in Apia with a boat, and ply up and down the coast to A'ana and Atua (our own Tuamasaga being quite drained of resources) in order to supply the working squad with food. Tools they did ask for, but it was especially mentioned that I was to make no presents. In short, the whole of this little " presentation " to me had been planned with a good deal more consideration than goes usually with a native campaign.

[I sat on the opposite side of the circle to the Talking-Man. His face was quite calm and highbred as he went through the usual Samoan expressions of politeness and compliment, but when he came on to the object of their visit, on their love and gratitude to

Tusitala, how his name was always in their prayers, and his goodness to them, when they had no other friend, was their most cherished memory, he warmed up to real, burning, genuine feeling. I had never seen the Samoan mask of reserve laid aside before, and it touched me more than anything else. A.M.*]

This morning as ever was, bright and early up came the whole gang of them, a lot of sturdy, common-looking lads they seemed to be for the most part, and fell to on my new road. Old Poè was in the highest of good spirits, and looked better in health than he has done any time in two years, being positively rejuvenated by the success of his scheme. He jested as he served out the new tools, and I am sorry to say damned the Government up hill and down dale, probably with a view to show off his position as a friend of the family before his work-boys. Now, whether or not their impulse will last them through the road does not matter to me one hair. It is the fact that they have attempted it, that they have volunteered and are now really trying to execute a thing that was never before heard of in Samoa. Think of it! It is road-making—the most fruitful cause (after taxes) of all rebellions in Samoa, a thing to which they could not be wiled with money nor driven by punishment. It does give me a sense of having done something in Samoa after all.

Now there's one long story for you about "my blacks."—Yours ever,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To CHARLES BAXTER

The following was written on hearing of the death of his friend's father.

[*Vailima, September,* 1894]

MY DEAR CHARLES,— . . . Well, there is no more Edmund Baxter now; and I think I may say I know

*"A.M." stands for Amanuensis.

how you feel. He was one of the best, the kindest, and the most genial men I ever knew. I shall always remember his brisk, cordial ways and the essential goodness which he showed me whenever we met, with gratitude. And the always is such a little while now! He is another of the landmarks gone; when it comes to my own turn to lay my weapons down, I shall do so with thankfulness and fatigue; and whatever be my destiny afterward, I shall be glad to lie down with my fathers in honour. It is human at least, if not divine. And these deaths make me think of it with an ever greater readiness. Strange that you should be beginning a new life, when I, who am a little your junior, am thinking of the end of mine. But I have had hard lines; I have been so long waiting for death, I have unwrapped my thoughts from about life so long, that I have not a filament left to hold by; I have done my fiddling so long under Vesuvius, that I have almost forgotten to play, and can only wait for the eruption, and think it long of coming. Literally, no man has more wholly outlived life than I. And still it's good fun.

R. L. S.

To R. A. M. Stevenson

R. L. S. had received from his cousin "Bob" a letter announcing, among other things, the birth of a son to the writer, and rambling suggestively, as may be guessed from the following reply, over many disconnected themes: the ethnology of Scotland, paternity and heredity, civilisation *versus* primitive customs and instincts, the story of their own descent, the method of writing in collaboration, education, Christianity and sex, the religion of conduct, anarchism, etc.; all which matters are here discursively touched on. "Old Skene" is the distinguished Scottish antiquarian and historian, William Forbes Skene, in whose firm (Skene & Edwards, W.S.) Stevenson had for a time served irregularly enough as an unpaid clerk.

[*Vailima, September,* 1894]

Dear Bob,—You are in error about the Picts. They were a Gaelic race, spoke a Celtic tongue, and we

have no evidence that I know of that they were blacker than other Celts. The Balfours, I take it, were plainly Celts; their name shows it—the "cold croft" it means; so does their country. Where the *black* Scotch come from nobody knows; but I recognise with you the fact that the whole of Britain is rapidly and progressively becoming more pigmented; already in one man's life I can decidedly trace a difference in the children about a school door. But colour is not an essential part of a man or a race. Take my Polynesians, an Asiatic people probably from the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf. They range through any amount of shades, from the burnt hue of the Low Archipelago islander, which seems half negro, to the "bleached" pretty women of the Marquesas (close by on the map), who come out for a festival no darker than an Italian; their colour seems to vary directly with the degree of exposure to the sun. And, as with negroes, the babes are born white; only it should seem a *little sack* of pigment at the lower part of the spine, which presently spreads over the whole field. Very puzzling. But to return. The Picts furnish to-day perhaps a third of the population of Scotland, say another third for Scots and Britons, and the third for Norse and Angles is a bad third. Edinburgh was a Pictish place. But the fact is, we don't know their frontiers. Tell some of your journalist friends with a good style to popularise old Skene; or say your prayers, and read him for yourself; he was a Great Historian, and I was his blessed clerk, and did not know it; and you will not be in a state of grace about the Picts till you have studied him. J. Horne Stevenson (do you know him?) is working this up with me, and the fact is—it's not interesting to the public—but it's interesting, and very interesting, in itself, and just now very embarrassing—this rural parish supplied Glasgow with such a quantity of Stevensons in the beginning of last century! There is just a link wanting; and we might be able to go back to the eleventh century, always undistinguished,

but clearly traceable. When I say just a link, I guess I may be taken to mean a dozen. What a singular thing is this undistinguished perpetuation of a family throughout the centuries, and the sudden bursting forth of character and capacity that began with our grandfather! But as I go on in life, day by day, I become more of a bewildered child; I cannot get used to this world, to procreation, to heredity, to sight, to hearing; the commonest things are a burthen. The prim obliterated polite face of life, and the broad, bawdy, and orgiastic—or mænadic—foundations, form a spectacle to which no habit reconciles me; and "I could wish my days to be bound each to each" by the same open-mouthed wonder. They *are* anyway, and whether I wish it or not.

I remember very well your attitude to life, this conventional surface of it. You had none of that curiosity for the social stage directions, the trivial *ficelles* of the business; it is simian; but that is how the wild youth of man is captured; you wouldn't imitate, hence you kept free—a wild dog, outside the kennel—and came dam near starving for your pains. The key to the business is of course the belly; difficult as it is to keep that in view in the zone of three miraculous meals a day in which we were brought up. Civilisation has become reflex with us; you might think that hunger was the name of the best sauce; but hunger to the cold solitary under a bush of a rainy night is the name of something quite different. I defend civilisation for the thing it is, for the thing it has *come* to be, the standpoint of a real old Tory. My ideal would be the Female Clan. But how can you turn these crowding dumb multitudes *back?* They don't do anything *because;* they do things, write able articles, stitch shoes, dig, from the purely simian impulse. Go and reason with monkeys!

No, I am right about Jean Lillie. Jean Lillie, our double great-grandmother, the daughter of David Lillie, sometime Deacon of the Wrights, married, first,

Alan Stevenson, who died May 26, 1774, "at Santt Kittes of a fiver," by whom she had Robert Stevenson, born 8th June, 1772; and, second, in May or June, 1787, Thomas Smith, a widower, and already the father of our grandmother. This improbable double connection always tends to confuse a student of the family. Thomas Smith being doubly our great-grandfather.

I looked on the perpetuation of our honoured name with veneration. My mother collared one of the photos, of course; the other is stuck up on my wall as the chief of our sept. Do you know any of the Gaelic-Celtic sharps? you might ask what the name means. It puzzles me. I find a *M'Stein* and a *MacStephane;* and our own great-grandfather always called himself Steenson, though he wrote it Stevenson. There are at least three *places* called Stevenson—*Stevenson* in Cunningham, *Stevenson* in Peebles, and *Stevenson* in Haddington. And it was not the Celtic trick, I understand, to call places after people. I am going to write to Sir Herbert Maxwell about the name, but you might find some one.

Get the Anglo-Saxon heresy out of your head; they superimposed their language, they scarce modified the race; only in Berwickshire and Roxburgh have they very largely affected the place names. The Scandinavians did much more to Scotland than the Angles. The Saxons didn't come.

Enough of this sham antiquarianism. Yes, it is in the matter of the book,* of course, that collaboration shows; as for the manner, it is superficially all mine, in the sense that the last copy is all in my hand. Lloyd did not even put pen to paper in the Paris scenes or the Barbizon scene; it was no good; he wrote and often rewrote all the rest; I had the best service from him on the character of Nares. You see, we had been just meeting the man, and his memory was full of the man's words and ways. And Lloyd is an impressionist, pure and simple. The great difficulty of collaboration is that

* Of *The Wrecker.*

you can't explain what you mean. I know what kind of effect I mean a character to give—what kind of *tache* he is to make; but how am I to tell my collaborator in words? Hence it was necessary to say, "Make him So-and-So"; and this was all right for Nares and Pinkerton and Loudon Dodd, whom we both knew, but for Bellairs, for instance—a man with whom I passed ten minutes fifteen years ago—what was I to say? and what could Lloyd do? I, as a personal artist, can begin a character with only a haze in my head, but how if I have to translate the haze into words before I begin? In our manner of collaboration (which I think the only possible—I mean that of one person being responsible and giving the *coup de pouce* to every part of the work) I was spared the obviously hopeless business of trying to explain to my collaborator what *style* I wished a passage to be treated in. These are the times that illustrate to a man the inadequacy of spoken language. Now—to be just to written language—I can (or could) find a language for my every mood, but how could I *tell* any one beforehand what this effect was to be, which it would take every art that I possessed, and hours and hours of deliberate labour and selection and rejection, to produce? These are the impossibilities of collaboration. Its immediate advantage is to focus two minds together on the stuff, and to produce in consequence an extraordinarily greater richness of purview, consideration, and invention. The hardest chapter of all was "Cross Questions and Crooked Answers." You would not believe what that cost us before it assumed the least unity and colour. Lloyd wrote it at least thrice, and I at least five times—this is from memory. And was that last chapter worth the trouble it cost? Alas, that I should ask the question! Two classes of men—the artist and the educationalist—are sworn, on soul and conscience, not to ask it. You get an ordinary, grinning, red-headed boy, and you have to educate him. Faith supports you; you give your valuable hours, the boy

does not seem to profit, but that way your duty lies, for which you are paid, and you must persevere. Education has always seemed to me one of the few possible and dignified ways of life. A sailor, a shepherd, a schoolmaster—to a less degree, a soldier—and (I don't know why, upon my soul, except as a sort of schoolmaster's unofficial assistant, and a kind of acrobat in tights) an artist, almost exhaust the category.

If I had to begin again—I know not—*si jeunesse savait, si vieillesse pouvait* . . . I know not at all—I believe I should try to honour Sex more religiously. The worst of our education is that Christianity does not recognise and hallow Sex. It looks askance at it, over its shoulder, oppressed as it is by reminiscences of hermits and Asiatic self-tortures. It is a terrible hiatus in our modern religions that they cannot see and make venerable that which they ought to see first and hallow most. Well, it is so; I cannot be wiser than my generation.

But no doubt there is something great in the half-success that has attended the effort of turning into an emotional religion Bald Conduct without any appeal, or almost none, to the figurative, mysterious, and constitutive facts of life. Not that conduct is not constitutive, but dear! it's dreary! On the whole, conduct is better dealt with on the cast-iron "gentleman" and duty formula, with as little fervour and poetry as possible; stoical and short. . . . There is a new something or other in the wind, which exercises me hugely: anarchy,—I mean, anarchism. People who (for pity's sake) commit dastardly murders very basely, die like saints, and leave beautiful letters behind 'em (did you see Vaillant to his daughter? it was the New Testament over again); people whose conduct is inexplicable to me, and yet their spiritual life higher than that of most. This is just what the early Christians must have seemed to the Romans. Is this, then a new *drive** among the monkeys? Mind you, Bob, if they

* *Trieb*, impulse.

go on being martyred a few years more the gross, dull, not unkindly bourgeois may get tired or shamed or afraid of going on martyring; and the anarchists come out at the top just like the early Christians. That is, of course, they will step into power as a *personnel*, but God knows what they may believe when they come to do so; it can't be stranger or more improbable than what Christianity had come to be by the same time.

Your letter was easily read, the pagination presented no difficulty, and I read it with much edification and gusto. To look back, and to stereotype one bygone humour—what a hopeless thing! The mind runs ever in a thousand eddies like a river between cliffs. You (the ego) are always spinning round in it, east, west, north and south. You are twenty years old, and forty, and five, and the next moment you are freezing at an imaginary eighty; you are never the plain forty-four that you should be by dates. (The most philosophical language is the Gaelic, which has *no present tense*—and the most useless.) How, then, to choose some former age, and stick there?

R. L. S.

To Sir Herbert Maxwell

Vailima, Samoa, September 10, 1894

Dear Sir Herbert Maxwell,—I am emboldened by reading your very interesting Rhind Lectures to put to you a question: What is my name, Stevenson?

I find it in the forms Stevinetoun, Stevensoune, Stevensonne, Stenesone, Stewinsoune, M'Stein, and MacStephane. My family, and (as far as I can gather) the majority of the inglorious clan, hailed from the borders of Cunningham and Renfrew, and the upper waters of the Clyde. In the Barony of Bothwell, was the seat of the laird Stevenson of Stevenson; but, as of course you know, there is a parish in Cunningham

and places in Peebles and Haddington bearing the same name.

If you can at all help me, you will render me a real service which I wish I could think of some manner to repay. Believe me, yours truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

P.S.—I should have added that I have perfect evidence before me that (for some obscure reason) Stevenson was a favourite alias with the M'Gregors.

To SIDNEY COLVIN

Vailima, Samoa, October 6th, 1894

MY DEAR COLVIN,—We have had quite an interesting month and mostly in consideration of that road which I think I told you was about to be made. It was made without a hitch, though I confess I was considerably surprised. When they got through, I wrote a speech to them, sent it down to a Missionary to be translated, and invited the lot to a feast. I thought a good deal of this feast. The occasion was really interesting. I wanted to pitch it in hot. And I wished to have as many influential witnesses present as possible. Well, as it drew towards the day I had nothing but refusals. Everybody supposed it was to be a political occasion, that I had made a hive of rebels up here, and was going to push for new hostilities.

The Amanuensis has been ill, and after the above trial petered out. I must return to my own, lone Waverley. The captain refused, telling me why; and at last I had to beat up for people almost with prayers. However, I got a good lot, as you will see by the accompanying newspaper report. The road contained this inscription, drawn up by the chiefs themselves:

"THE ROAD OF GRATITUDE

"Considering the great love of Tusitala in his loving care of us in our distress in the prison, we have

therefore prepared a splendid gift. It shall never be muddy, it shall endure for ever, this road that we have dug."

This the newspaper reporter could not give, not knowing any Samoan. The same reason explains his references to Seumanutafa's speech, which was not long and *was* important, for it was a speech of courtesy and forgiveness to his former enemies. It was very much applauded. Secondly, it was not Poè, it was Mataafà (don't confuse with Mataafa) who spoke for the prisoners. Otherwise it is extremely correct.

I beg your pardon for so much upon my aboriginals. Even you must sympathise with me in this unheard-of compliment, and my having been able to deliver so severe a sermon with acceptance. It remains a nice point of conscience what I should wish done in the matter. I think this meeting, its immediate results, and the terms of what I said to them, desirable to be known. It will do a little justice to me, who have not had too much justice done me. At the same time, to send this report to the paper is truly an act of self-advertisement, and I dislike the thought. Query, in a man who has been so much calumniated, is that not justifiable? I do not know; be my judge. Mankind is too complicated for me; even myself. Do I wish to advertise? I think I do, God help me! I have had hard times here, as every man must have who mixes up with public business; and I bemoan myself, knowing that all I have done has been in the interest of peace and good government; and having once delivered my mind, I would like it, I think, to be made public. But the other part of me *regimbs.**

I know I am at a climacteric for all men who live by

* It seemed an obvious duty to publish the speech in question through the English press, as the best proof both of Stevenson's wise and understanding methods of dealing with his native friends, and of the affection and authority which he enjoyed among them. I have reprinted it, as a necessary supplement to this letter, in an appendix at the end of the present volume.

their wits, so I do not despair. But the truth is I am pretty nearly useless at literature, and I will ask you to spare *St. Ives* when it goes to you; it is a sort of *Count Robert of Paris*. But I hope rather a *Dombey and Son*, to be succeeded by *Our Mutual Friend* and *Great Expectations* and *A Tale of Two Cities*. No toil has been spared over the ungrateful canvas; and it *will not* come together, and I must live, and my family. Were it not for my health which made it impossible, I could not find it in my heart to forgive myself that I did not stick to an honest, commonplace trade when I was young, which might have now supported me during these ill years. But do not suppose me to be down in anything else; only, for the nonce, my skill deserts me, such as it is, or was. It was a very little dose of inspiration, and a pretty little trick of style, long lost, improved by the most heroic industry. So far, I have managed to please the journalists. But I am a fictitious article and have long known it. I am read by journalists, by my fellow-novelists, and by boys; with these, *incipit et explicit* my vogue. Good thing anyway! for it seems to have sold the Edition. And I look forward confidently to an aftermath; I do not think my health can be so hugely improved, without some subsequent improvement in my brains. Though, of course, there is the possibility that literature is a morbid secretion, and abhors health! I do not think it is possible to have fewer illusions than I. I sometimes wish I had more. They are amusing. But I cannot take myself seriously, as an artist; the limitations are so obvious. I did take myself seriously as a workman of old, but my practice has fallen off. I am now an idler and cumberer of the ground; it may be excused to me perhaps by twenty years of industry and ill-health, which have taken the cream off the milk.

As I was writing this last sentence, I heard the strident rain drawing near across the forest, and by the time I was come to the word "cream" it burst upon my roof, and has since redoubled, and roared upon it.

A very welcome change. All smells of the good wet earth, sweetly, with a kind of Highland touch; the crystal rods of the shower, as I look up, have drawn their criss-cross over everything; and a gentle and very welcome coolness comes up around me in little draughts, blessed draughts, not chilling, only equalising the temperature. Now the rain is off in this spot, but I hear it roaring still in the nigh neighbourhood—and that moment, I was driven from the verandah by random raindrops, spitting at me through the Japanese blinds. These are not tears with which the page is spotted! Now the windows stream, the roof reverberates. It is good; it answers something which is in my heart; I know not what; old memories of the wet moorland belike.

Well, it has blown by again, and I am in my place once more, with an accompaniment of perpetual dripping on the verandah—and very much inclined for a chat. The exact subject I do not know! It will be bitter at least, and that is strange, for my attitude is essentially *not* bitter, but I have come into these days when a man sees above all the seamy side, and I have dwelt some time in a small place where he has an opportunity of reading little motives that he would miss in the great world, and indeed, to-day, I am almost ready to call the world an error. Because? Because I have not drugged myself with successful work, and there are all kinds of trifles buzzing in my ear, unfriendly trifles, from the least to the—well, to the pretty big. All these that touch me are Pretty Big; and yet none touch me in the least, if rightly looked at, except the one eternal burthen to go on making an income for my family. That is rightly the root and ground of my ill. The jingling, tingling, damned mint sauce is the trouble always; and if I could find a place where I could lie down and give up for (say) two years, and allow the sainted public to support me, if it were a lunatic asylum, wouldn't I go, just! But we can't have both extremes at once, worse luck! I

should like to put my savings into a proprietarian investment, and retire in the meanwhile into a communistic retreat, which is double-dealing. But you men with salaries don't know how a family weighs on a fellow's mind.

I hear the article in next week's *Herald* is to be a great affair, and all the officials who came to me the other day are to be attacked! This is the unpleasant side of being (without a salary) in public life; I will leave any one to judge if my speech was well intended, and calculated to do good. It was even daring—I assure you one of the chiefs looked like a fiend at my description of Samoan warfare. Your warning was not needed; we are all determined to *keep the peace* and to *hold our peace*. I know, my dear fellow, how remote all this sounds! Kindly pardon your friend. I have my life to live here; these interests are for me immediate; and if I do not write of them, I might as soon not write at all. There is the difficulty in a distant correspondence. It is perhaps easy for me to enter into and understand your interests; I own it is difficult for you; but you must just wade through them for friendship's sake, and try to find tolerable what is vital for your friend. I cannot forbear challenging you to it, as to intellectual lists. It is the proof of intelligence, the proof of not being a barbarian, to be able to enter into something outside of oneself, something that does not touch one's next neighbour in the city omnibus.

Good-bye, my lord. May your race continue and you flourish.—Yours ever, TUSITALA.

To ALISON CUNNINGHAM

[*Vailima*] *October 8th*, 1894

MY DEAR CUMMY,—So I hear you are ailing? Think shame to yoursel'! So you think there is nothing better to be done with time than that? and be sure we can all do much ourselves to decide whether we are to be

ill or well! like a man on the gymnastic bars. We are all pretty well. As for me, there is nothing the matter with me in the world, beyond the disgusting circumstance that I am not so young as once I was. Lloyd has a gymnastic machine, and practises upon it every morning for an hour: he is beginning to be a kind of young Samson. Austin grows fat and brown, and gets on not so ill with his lessons, and my mother is in great price. We are having knock-me-down weather for heat; I never remember it so hot before, and I fancy it means we are to have a hurricane again this year, I think; since we came here, we have not had a single gale of wind! The Pacific is but a child to the North Sea; but when she does get excited, and gets up and girds herself, she can do something good. We have had a very interesting business here. I helped the chiefs who were in prison; and when they were set free, what should they do but offer to make a part of my road for me out of gratitude? Well, I was ashamed to refuse, and the trumps dug my road for me, and put up this inscription on a board:—

"Considering the great love of His Excellency Tusitala in his loving care for us in our tribulation in the prison we have made this great gift; it shall never be muddy, it shall go on for ever, this road that we have dug!"

We had a great feast when it was done, and I read them a kind of lecture, which I dare say Auntie will have, and can let you see. Weel, guid bye to ye, and joy be wi' ye! I hae nae time to say mair. They say I'm gettin' *fat*—a fact!—Your laddie, with all love,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To James Payn

Vailima, Samoa, Nov. 4, 1894

MY DEAR JAMES PAYN,—I am asked to relate to you a little incident of domestic life at Vailima. I had read

your *Gleams of Memory,* No. 1; it then went to my wife, to Osbourne, to the cousin that is within my gates, and to my respected amanuensis, Mrs. Strong. Sunday approached. In the course of the afternoon I was attracted to the great 'all—the winders is by Vanderputty—which upon entering I beheld a memorable scene. The floor was bestrewn with the forms of midshipmen from the *Curaçoa*—" boldly say a wilderness of gunroom "—and in the midst of this sat Mrs. Strong throned on the sofa and reading aloud *Gleams of Memory.* They had just come the length of your immortal definition of boyhood in the concrete and I had the pleasure to see the whole party dissolve under its influence with inextinguishable laughter. I thought this was not half bad for arthritic gout! Depend upon it, sir, when I go into the arthritic gout business, I shall be done with literature, or at least with the funny business. It is quite true I have my battlefields behind me. I have done perhaps as much work as anybody else under the most deplorable conditions. But two things fall to be noticed: In the first place, I never was in actual pain; and in the second, I was never funny. I'll tell you the worst day that I remember. I had a hemorrhage, and was not allowed to speak; then, induced by the devil, or an errant doctor, I was led to partake of that bowl which neither cheers nor inebriates—the castor-oil bowl. Now, when castor-oil goes right, it is one thing; but when it goes wrong, it is another. And it went wrong with me that day. The waves of faintness and nausea succeeded each other for twelve hours, and I do feel a legitimate pride in thinking that I stuck to my work all through and wrote a good deal of *Admiral Guinea* (which I might just as well not have written for all the reward it ever brought me) in spite of the barbarous bad conditions. I think that is my great boast; and it seems a little thing alongside of your *Gleams of Memory* illustrated by spasms of arthritic gout. We really should have an order of merit in the trade of

letters. For valour, Scott would have had it; Pope too; myself on the strength of that castor-oil; and James Payn would be a Knight Commander. The worst of it is, though Lang tells me you exhibit the courage of Huish, that not even an order can alleviate the wretched annoyance of the business. I have always said that there is nothing like pain; toothache, dumb-ague, arthritic gout, it does not matter what you call it, if the screw is put upon the nerves sufficiently strong, there is nothing left in heaven or in earth that can interest the sufferer. Still, even to this there is the consolation that it cannot last for ever. Either you will be relieved and have a good hour again before the sun goes down, or else you will be liberated. It is something after all (although not much) to think that you are leaving a brave example; that other literary men love to remember, as I am sure they will love to remember, everything about you—your sweetness, your brightness, your helpfulness to all of us, and in particular those one or two really adequate and noble papers which you have been privileged to write during these last years.—With the heartiest and kindest good-will, I remain, yours ever,

R. L. S.

To Sidney Colvin

This was the last letter I received from my friend. On the morning of his death the following month he spoke of being behindhand with his December letter and of his intention to write it next day.

[*Vailima, November,* 1894]

Dear Colvin,—Saturday there was a ball to the ship, and on Sunday Gurr had a child to be baptised. Belle was to be godmother and had to be got down; which was impossible, as the jester Euclid says. However, we had four men of very different heights to take the poles of a sort of bier and carry her shoulder high down the road, till we met a trap. On the return journey on Sunday, they were led by Austin playing (?)

on a bugle, and you have no idea how picturesque a business it was; the four half-naked bearers, the cane lounge, at that height from the ground, and Belle in black and pretty pale, reclining very like a dead warrior of yore. However she wasn't dead yet. All the rest of the afternoon we hung about and had consultations about the baptism. Just as we went in to dinner, I saw the moon rise accurately full, looking five times greater than nature, and the face that we try to decipher in its silver disk wearing an obliterated but benignant expression. The ball followed; blue-jackets and officers danced indiscriminately, after their pleasant fashion; and Belle, who lay in the hotel verandah, and held a sort of reception all night, had her longest visit from one of the blue-jackets, her partner in the last ball. About one on the Sunday morning all was over, and we went to bed—I, alas! only to get up again, my room being in the verandah, where a certain solemnly absurd family conclave (all drunk) was being held until (I suppose) three. By six, I was awake, and went out on the verandah. On the east the dawn had broken, cold and pink and rust colour, and the marshes were all smoking whitely and blowing into the bay like smoke, but on the west all was golden. The street was empty, and right over it hung the setting moon, accurately round, yellow as an apricot, but slumberous, with an effect of afternoon you would not believe if you had not seen it. Then followed a couple of hours on the verandah I would be glad to forget. By seven X.Y. had joined me, as drunk as they make 'em. As he sat and talked to me, he smelt of the charnel house, methought. He looked so old (he is one month my senior); he spoke so silly; his poor leg is again covered with boils, which will spell death to him; and—enough. That interview has made me a teetotaller. O, it is bad to grow old. For me, it is practically hell. I do not like the consolations of age. I was born a young man; I have continued so; and before I end, a pantaloon, a driveller—enough again.

But I don't enjoy getting elderly. Belle and I got home about three in the afternoon, she having in the meantime renounced all that makes life worth living in the name of little Miss Gurr, and I seriously reflecting on renouncing the kindly bowl in earnest! Presently after arrived the news of Margery Ide (the C. J.'s daughter) being seriously ill, alarmingly ill. Fanny wanted to go down; it was a difficult choice; she was not fit for it; on the other hand (and by all accounts) the patient would die if she did not get better nursing. So we made up our own minds, and F. and I set out about dusk, came to the C. J.'s in the middle of dinner, and announced our errand. I am glad to say the C. J. received her very willingly; and I came home again, leaving her behind, where she was certainly much wanted.

Nov. 4th.—You ask about *St. Ives.* No, there is no Burford Bridge in it, and no Boney. He *is* a squire of dames, and there are petticoats in the story, and damned bad ones too, and it is of a tolerable length, a hundred thousand, I believe, at least. Also, since you are curious on the point, St. Ives learned his English from a Mr. Vicary, an English lawyer, a prisoner in France. He must have had a fine gift of languages!

Things are going on here in their usual gently disheartening gait. The Treaty Officials are both good fellows whom I can't help liking, but who will never make a hand of Samoa.—Yours ever,

R. L. Stevenson.

To Professor Meiklejohn

Congratulating an old friend of Savile Club days on his sailor son.

Vailima, Samoa, Nov. 6th, 1894

My dear Meiklejohn,—Greeting! This is but a word to say how much we felicitate ourselves on having made the acquaintance of Hughie. He is having a

famous good chance on board the *Curaçoa,* which is the best ship I have ever seen. And as for himself, he is a most engaging boy, of whom you may well be proud, and I have no mortal manner of doubt but what you are. He comes up here very often, where he is a great favourite with my ladies, and sings me " the melancholy airs of my native land " with much acceptancy. His name has recently become changed in Vailima. Beginning with the courteous "Mr. Meiklejohn," it shaded off into the familiar " Hughie," and finally degenerated into " the Whitrett." * I hear good reports of him aboard and ashore, and I scarce need to add my own testimony.

Hughie tells me you have gone into the publishing business, whereat I was much shocked. My own affairs with publishers are now in the most flourishing state, owing to my ingenuity in leaving them to be dealt with by a Scotch Writer to the Signet. It has produced revolutions in the book trade and my banking account. I tackled the Whitrett severely on a grammar you had published, which I had not seen and condemned out of hand and in the broadest Lallan. I even condescended on the part of that grammar which I thought to be the worst and condemned your presentation of the English verb unmercifully. It occurs to me, since you are a publisher, that the least thing you could do would be to send me a copy of that grammar to correct my estimate. But I fear I am talking too long to one of the enemy. I begin to hear in fancy the voice of Meiklejohn upraised in the Savile Club: " no quarter to publishers! " So I will ask you to present my compliments to Mrs. Meiklejohn upon her son, and to accept for yourself the warmest reminiscences of auld lang syne. —Yours sincerely,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

* Whitrett or Whitrack is Scots for a weasel: why applied to Mr. Meiklejohn I do not know.

To Lieutenant Eeles

Vailima, Samoa, November 24, 1894

My dear Eeles,—The hand, as you will perceive (and also the spelling!), is Teuila's, but the scrannel voice is what remains of Tusitala's. First of all, for business. When you go to London you are to charter a hansom cab and proceed to the Museum. It is particular fun to do this on Sundays when the Monument is shut up. Your cabman expostulates with you, you persist. The cabman drives up in front of the closed gates and says, "I told you so, sir." You breathe in the porter's ears the mystic name of *Colvin*, and he immediately unfolds the iron barrier. You drive in, and doesn't your cabman think you're a swell! A lord mayor is nothing to it. Colvin's door is the only one in the eastern gable of the building. Send in your card to him with "From R. L. S." in the corner, and the machinery will do the rest. Henry James's address is 34 De Vere Mansions West. I cannot remember where the place is; I cannot even remember on which side of the park. But it's one of those big Cromwell-Road-looking deserted thoroughfares out west in Kensington or Bayswater, or between the two; and anyway, Colvin will be able to put you on the direct track for Henry James. I do not send formal introductions, as I have taken the liberty to prepare both of them for seeing you already.

Hoskyn is staying with us.

It is raining dismally. The Curaçoa track is hardly passable, but it must be trod to-morrow by the degenerate feet of their successor the Wallaroos. I think it a very good account of these last that we don't think them either deformed or habitual criminals—they seem to be a kindly lot.

The doctor will give you all the gossip. I have preferred in this letter to stick to the strictly solid and necessary. With kind messages from all in the house

to all in the ward-room, all in the gun-room, and (may we dare to breathe it?) to him who walks abaft, believe me, my dear Eeles, yours ever,

R. L. STEVENSON.

To Sir Herbert Maxwell

Vailima, Samoa, December 1, 1894

DEAR SIR HERBERT,—Thank you very much for your long and kind letter. I shall certainly take your advice and call my cousin, the Lyon King, into council. It is certainly a very interesting subject, though I don't suppose it can possibly lead to anything, this connection between the Stevensons and M'Gregors. Alas! your invitation is to me a mere derision. My chances of visiting Heaven are about as valid as my chances of visiting Monreith. Though I should like well to see you, shrunken into a cottage, a literary Lord of Ravenscraig. I suppose it is the inevitable doom of all those who dabble in Scotch soil; but really your fate is the more blessed. I cannot conceive anything more grateful to me, or more amusing or more picturesque, than to live in a cottage outside your own park walls.—With renewed thanks, believe me, dear Sir Herbert, yours very truly,

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

To Andrew Lang

The following refers, of course, to *Weir of Hermiston,* the chief character of which was studied from the traditions of Lord Braxfield, and on which Stevenson was working at the full height of his powers when death overtook him two days later.

Vailima, Samoa, December 1, 1894

MY DEAR LANG,—For the portrait of Braxfield, much thanks! It is engraved from the same Raeburn portrait that I saw in '76 or '77 with so extreme a gusto that I have ever since been Braxfield's humble servant, and am now trying, as you know, to stick him into a novel.

Alas! one might as well try to stick in Napoleon. The picture shall be framed and hung up in my study. Not only as a memento of you, but as a perpetual encouragement to do better with his Lordship. I have not yet received the transcripts. They must be very interesting. Do you know, I picked up the other day an old *Longman's* where I found an article of yours that I had missed, about Christie's? I read it with great delight. The year ends with us pretty much as it began, among wars and rumours of wars, and a vast and splendid exhibition of official incompetence.—Yours ever, R. L. STEVENSON.

To EDMUND GOSSE

The next, and last, letter is to Mr. Gosse, dated also only two days before the writer's death. It acknowledges the dedication "To Tusitala" of that gentleman's volume of poems, *In Russet and Silver,* just received.

Vailima, Samoa, December 1, 1894

I AM afraid, my dear Weg, that this must be the result of bribery and corruption! The volume to which the dedication stands as preface seems to me to stand alone in your work; it is so natural, so personal, so sincere, so articulate in substance, and what you always were sure of—so rich in adornment.

Let me speak first of the dedication. I thank you for it from the heart. It is beautifully said, beautifully and kindly felt; and I should be a churl indeed if I were not grateful, and an ass if I were not proud. I remember when Symonds dedicated a book to me; I wrote and told him of "the pang of gratified vanity" with which I had read it. The pang was present again, but how much more sober and autumnal—like your volume. Let me tell you a story, or remind you of a story. In the year of grace something or other, anything between '76 and '78, I mentioned to you in my usual autobiographical and inconsiderate manner that I was hard up. You said promptly that you had a

balance at your banker's, and could make it convenient to let me have a cheque, and I accepted and got the money—how much was it?—twenty or perhaps thirty pounds? I know not—but it was a great convenience. The same evening, or the next day, I fell in conversation (in my usual autobiographical and . . . see above) with a denizen of the Savile Club, name now gone from me, only his figure and a dim three-quarter view of his face remaining. To him I mentioned that you had given me a loan, remarking easily that of course it didn't matter to you. Whereupon he read me a lecture, and told me how it really stood with you financially. He was pretty serious; fearing, as I could not help perceiving, that I should take too light a view of the responsibility and the service (I was always thought too light—the irresponsible jester—you remember. *O, quantum mutatus ab illo!*). If I remember rightly, the money was repaid before the end of the week—or, to be more exact and a trifle pedantic, the se'nnight—but the service has never been forgotten; and I send you back this piece of ancient history, *consule Planco,* as a salute for your dedication, and propose that we should drink the health of the nameless one, who opened my eyes as to the true nature of what you did for me on that occasion.

But here comes my Amanuensis, so we'll get on more swimmingly now. You will understand perhaps that what so particularly pleased me in the new volume, what seems to me to have so personal and original a note, are the middle-aged pieces in the beginning. The whole of them, I may say, though I must own an especial liking to—

> "I yearn not for the fighting fate,
> That holds and hath achieved;
> I live to watch and meditate
> And dream—and be deceived."

You take the change gallantly. Not I, I must confess. It is all very well to talk of renunciation, and of course it has to be done. But, for my part, give me a roaring

toothache! I do like to be deceived and to dream, but I have very little use for either watching or meditation. I was not born for age. And, curiously enough, I seem to see a contrary drift in my work from that which is so remarkable in yours. You are going on sedately travelling through your ages, decently changing with the years to the proper tune. And here am I, quite out of my true course, and with nothing in my foolish elderly head but love-stories. This must repose upon some curious distinction of temperaments. I gather from a phrase, boldly autobiographical, that you are—well, not precisely growing thin. Can that be the difference?

It is rather funny that this matter should come up just now, as I am at present engaged in treating a severe case of middle age in one of my stories—"*The Justice-Clerk.*" The case is that of a woman, and I think that I am doing her justice. You will be interested, I believe, to see the difference in our treatments. *Secreta Vitæ* comes nearer to the case of my poor Kirstie. Come to think of it, Gosse, I believe the main distinction is that you have a family growing up around you, and I am a childless, rather bitter, very clear-eyed, blighted youth. I have, in fact, lost the path that makes it easy and natural for you to descend the hill. I am going at it straight. And where I have to go down it is a precipice.

I must not forget to give you a word of thanks for *An English Village*. It reminds me strongly of Keats, which is enough to say; and I was particularly pleased with the petulant sincerity of the concluding sentiment.

Well, my dear Gosse, here's wishing you all health and prosperity, as well as to the mistress and the bairns. May you live long, since it seems as if you would continue to enjoy life. May you write many more books as good as this one—only there's one thing impossible, you can never write another dedication that can give the same pleasure to the vanished

TUSITALA.

APPENDIX I

ACCOUNT OF THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF R. L. STEVENSON,

BY LLOYD OSBOURNE

HE wrote hard all that morning of the last day; his half-finished book, *Hermiston,* he judged the best he had ever written, and the sense of successful effort made him buoyant and happy as nothing else could. In the afternoon the mail fell to be answered; not business correspondence—for this was left till later—but replies to the long, kindly letters of distant friends, received but two days since, and still bright in memory.

At sunset he came downstairs; rallied his wife about the forebodings she could not shake off; talked of a lecturing tour to America that he was eager to make, "as he was now so well," and played a game at cards with her to drive away her melancholy. He said he was hungry; begged her assistance to help him make a salad for the evening meal; and to enhance the little feast, he brought up a bottle of old Burgundy from the cellar. He was helping his wife on the verandah, and gaily talking, when suddenly he put both hands to his head, and cried out, "What's that?" Then he asked quickly, "Do I look strange?" Even as he did so he fell on his knees beside her. He was helped into the great hall, between his wife and body-servant, Sosimo, losing consciousness instantly, as he lay back in the arm-chair that had once been his grandfather's. Little time was lost in bringing the doctors—Anderson, of the man-of-war, and his friend, Dr. Funk. They looked at him and shook their heads; they laboured

strenuously, and left nothing undone; but he had passed the bounds of human skill.

The dying man lay back in the chair, breathing heavily, his family about him, frenzied with grief, as they realised all hope was past. The dozen and more Samoans that formed part of the little clan of which he was chief sat in a wide semicircle on the floor, their reverent, troubled, sorrow-stricken faces all fixed upon their dying master. Some knelt on one knee, to be instantly ready for any command that might be laid upon them. A narrow bed was brought into the centre of the room, the Master was gently laid upon it, his head supported by a rest, the gift of Shelley's son. Slower and slower grew his respiration, wider the interval between the long, deep breaths. The Rev. Mr. Clarke was now come, an old and valued friend; he knelt and prayed as the life ebbed away.

He died at ten minutes past eight on Monday evening the 3rd of December, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

The great Union Jack that flew over the house was hauled down, and laid over the body, fit shroud for a loyal Scotsman. He lay in the hall which was ever his pride, where he had passed the gayest and most delightful hours of his life, a noble room with open stairway and mullioned windows. In it were the treasures of his far-off Scottish home: the old carved furniture, the paintings and busts that had been in his father's house before him. The Samoans passed in procession beside his bed, kneeling and kissing his hand, each in turn, before taking their places for the long night watch beside him. No entreaty could induce them to retire, to rest themselves for the painful and arduous duties of the morrow. It would show little love for Tusitala, they said, if they did not spend their last night beside him. Mournful and silent, they sat in deep dejection, poor, simple, loyal folk, fulfilling the duty they owed their chief.

A messenger was despatched to the few chiefs con-

nected with the family, to announce the tidings and bid them assemble their men on the morrow for the work there was to do.

Sosimo asked on behalf of the Roman Catholics that they might be allowed to recite the prayers for the dead. Till midnight the solemn chants continued, the prolonged, sonorous prayers of the Church of Rome, in commingled Latin and Samoan. Later still, a chief arrived with his retainers, bringing a precious mat to wrap about the dead.

He too knelt and kissed the hand of Tusitala, and took his place amid the sleepless watchers. Another arrived with a fine mat, a man of higher rank, whose incipient consumption had often troubled the Master.

"Talofa Tusitala!" he said as he drew nigh, and took a long, mournful look at the face he knew so well. When, later on, he was momentarily required on some business of the morrow, he bowed reverently before retiring. "Tofa Tusitala!" he said, "Sleep, Tusitala!"

The morning of the 4th of December broke cool and sunny, a beautiful day, rare at this season of the year. More fine mats were brought, until the Union Jack lay nigh concealed beneath them. Among the newcomers was an old Mataafa chief, one of the builders of the "Road of the Loving Hearts," a man who had spent many days in prison for participation in the rebellion. "I am only a poor Samoan, and ignorant," said he, as he crouched beside the body; "others are rich, and can give Tusitala the parting presents of rich fine mats; I am poor, and can give nothing this last day he receives his friends. Yet I am not afraid to come and look the last time in my friend's face, never to see him more till we meet with God. Behold! Tusitala is dead; Mataafa is also dead to us. These two great friends have been taken by God. When Mataafa was taken, who was our support but Tusitala? We were in prison, and he cared for us. We were sick, and he made us well. We were hungry, and he fed us. The day was no longer than his kindness. You are great

people and full of love. Yet who among you is so great as Tusitala? What is your love to his love? Our clan was Mataafà's clan, for whom I speak this day; therein was Tusitala also. We mourn them both."

A meeting of chiefs was held to apportion the work and divide the men into parties. Forty were sent with knives and axes to cut a path up the steep face of the mountain, and the writer himself led another party to the summit—men chosen from the immediate family—to dig the grave on a spot where it was Mr. Stevenson's wish that he should lie. Nothing more picturesque can be imagined than the narrow ledge that forms the summit of Vaea, a place no wider than a room, and flat as a table. On either side the land descends precipitously; in front lies the vast ocean and the surf-swept reefs; to the right and left green mountains rise, densely covered with the primeval forest. Two hundred years ago the eyes of another man turned towards that same peak of Vaea as the spot that should ultimately receive his war-worn body: Soalu, a famous chief.

All the morning, Samoans were arriving with flowers; few of these were white, for they have not learned our foreign custom, and the room glowed with the many colours. There were no strangers on that day, no acquaintances; those only were called who would deeply feel the loss. At one o'clock a body of powerful Samoans bore away the coffin, hid beneath a tattered red ensign that had flown above his vessel in many a corner of the South Seas. A path so steep and rugged taxed their strength to the utmost; for not only was the journey difficult in itself, but extreme care was requisite to carry the coffin shoulder high.

Half an hour later, the rest of his friends followed. It was a formidable ascent, and tried them hard. Nineteen Europeans, and some sixty Samoans, reached the summit. After a short rest, the Rev. W. E. Clarke read the burial service of the Church of England, interposing a prayer that Mr. Stevenson had written

and had read aloud to his family only the evening before his death:—

"We beseech Thee, Lord, to behold us with favour, folk of many families and nations, gathered together in the peace of this roof; weak men and women, subsisting under the covert of Thy patience.

"Be patient still; suffer us yet a while longer—with our broken purposes of good, and our idle endeavours against evil—suffer us a while longer to endure, and (if it may be) help us to do better. Bless to us our extraordinary mercies; if the day come when these must be taken, have us play the man under affliction. Be with our friends; be with ourselves. Go with each of us to rest; if any awake, temper to them the dark hours of watching; and when the day returns to us, our sun and comforter, call us up with morning faces and with morning hearts—eager to labour—eager to be happy, if happiness shall be our portion—and if the day be marked for sorrow, strong to endure it.

"We thank Thee and praise Thee; and in the words of Him to whom this day is sacred, close our oblation."

APPENDIX II

ADDRESS OF R. L. STEVENSON TO THE CHIEFS, ON THE OPENING OF THE ROAD OF GRATITUDE, OCTOBER, 1894

MR. STEVENSON said, "We are met together to-day to celebrate an event and to do honour to certain chiefs, my friends,—Lelei, Mataafà, Salevao, Poè Teleso, Tupuola Lotofaga, Tupuola Amaile, Muliaiga, Ifopo, and Fatialofa. You are all aware in some degree of what has happened. You know these chiefs to have been prisoners; you perhaps know that during the term of their confinement I had it in my power to do them certain favours. One thing some of you cannot know, that they were immediately repaid by answering attentions. They were liberated by the new administration; by the King and the Chief Justice, and the Ta'its'ifono, who are here amongst us to-day, and to whom we all desire to tender our renewed and perpetual gratitude for that favour. As soon as they were free men—owing no man anything—instead of going home, to their own places and families, they came to me; they offered to do this work for me as a free gift, without hire, without supplies, and I was tempted at first to refuse their offer. I knew the country to be poor, I knew famine threatening; I knew their families long disorganised for want of supervision. Yet I accepted, because I thought the lesson of that road might be more useful to Samoa than a thousand breadfruit trees; and because to myself it was an exquisite pleasure to receive that which was so handsomely

offered. It is now done; you have trod it to-day in coming hither. It has been made for me by chiefs; some of them old, some sick, all newly delivered from a harassing confinement, and in spite of weather unusually hot and insalubrious. I have seen these chiefs labour valiantly with their own hands upon the work, and I have set up over it, now that it is finished, the name of 'The Road of Gratitude' (the road of loving hearts) and the names of those that built it. 'In perpetuam memoriam,' we say, and speak idly. At least so long as my own life shall be spared, it shall be here perpetuated; partly for my pleasure and in my gratitude; partly for others; to continually publish the lesson of this road."

Addressing himself to the chiefs, Mr. Stevenson then said:—

"I will tell you, Chiefs, that, when I saw you working on that road, my heart grew warm; not with gratitude only, but with hope. It seemed to me that I read the promise of something good for Samoa; it seemed to me, as I looked at you, that you were a company of warriors in a battle, fighting for the defence of our common country against all aggression. For there is a time to fight, and a time to dig. You Samoans may fight, you may conquer twenty times, and thirty times, and all will be in vain. There is but one way to defend Samoa. Hear it before it is too late. It is to make roads, and gardens, and care for your trees, and sell their produce wisely, and, in one word, to occupy and use your country. If you do not, others will."

The speaker then referred to the parable of the "Talents," Matt. xxv. 14-30, and continuing, impressively asked: "What are you doing with your talent, Samoa? Your three talents, Savaii, Upolu, and Tutuila? Have you buried it in a napkin? Not Upolu at least. You have rather given it out to be trodden under feet of swine: and the swine cut down food trees and burn houses, according to the nature of swine, or that much worse animal, foolish man, acting according

to his folly. 'Thou knowest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not strawed.' But God hath both sown and strawed for you here in Samoa; He has given you a rich soil, a splendid sun, copious rain; all is ready to your hand, half done. And I repeat to you that thing which is sure: if you do not occupy and use your country, others will. It will not continue to be yours or your children's if you occupy it for nothing. You and your children will in that case be cast out into outer darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth; for that is the law of God which passeth not away. I who speak to you have seen these things. I have seen them with my eyes—these judgments of God. I have seen them in Ireland, and I have seen them in the mountains of my own country—Scotland—and my heart was sad. These were a fine people in the past—brave, gay, faithful, and very much like Samoans, except in one particular, that they were much wiser and better at that business of fighting of which you think so much. But the time came to them as it now comes to you, and it did not find them ready. The messenger came into their villages, and they did not know him; they were told, as you are told, to use and occupy their country, and they would not hear. And now you may go through great tracts of the land and scarce meet a man or a smoking house, and see nothing but sheep feeding. The other people that I tell you of have come upon them like a foe in the night, and these are the other people's sheep who browse upon the foundation of their houses. To come nearer; and I have seen this judgment in Oahu also. I have ridden there the whole day along the coast of an island. Hour after hour went by and I saw the face of no living man except that of the guide who rode with me. All along that desolate coast, in one bay after another, we saw, still standing, the churches that have been built by the Hawaiians of old. There must have been many hundreds, many thousands, dwelling there in old times, and worshipping God in these now empty

churches. For to-day they were empty; the doors were closed, the villages had disappeared, the people were dead and gone; only the church stood on like a tombstone over a grave, in the midst of the white men's sugar fields. The other people had come and used that country, and the Hawaiians who occupied it for nothing had been swept away, 'where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

"I do not speak of this lightly, because I love Samoa and her people. I love the land, I have chosen it to be my home while I live, and my grave after I am dead; and I love the people, and have chosen them to be my people to live and die with. And I see that the day is come now of the great battle; of the great and the last opportunity by which it shall be decided, whether you are to pass away like these other races of which I have been speaking, or to stand fast, and have your children living on and honouring your memory in the land you received of your fathers.

"The Land Commission and the Chief Justice will soon have ended their labours. Much of your land will be restored to you, to do what you can with. Now is the time the messenger is come into your villages to summon you; the man is come with the measuring rod; the fire is lighted in which you shall be tried; whether you are gold or dross. Now is the time for the true champions of Samoa to stand forth. And who is the true champion of Samoa? It is not the man who blackens his face, and cuts down trees, and kills pigs and wounded men. It is the man who makes roads, who plants food trees, who gathers harvests, and is a profitable servant before the Lord, using and improving that great talent that has been given him in trust. That is the brave soldier; that is the true champion; because all things in a country hang together like the links of the anchor cable, one by another: but the anchor itself is industry.

"There is a friend of most of us, who is far away; not to be forgotten where I am, where Tupuola is,

where Poè, Lelei, Mataafà, Salevao, Poè Teleso, Tupuola Lotofaga, Tupuola Amaile, Muliaiga, Ifopo, Fatialofa, Lemusu are. He knew what I am telling you; no man better. He saw the day was come when Samoa had to walk in a new path, and to be defended, not only with guns and blackened faces, and the noise of men shouting, but by digging and planting, reaping and sowing. When he was still here amongst us, he busied himself planting cacao; he was anxious and eager about agriculture and commerce, and spoke and wrote continually; so that when we turn our minds to the same matters, we may tell ourselves that we are still obeying Mataafa. Ua tautala mai pea o ia ua mamao.

"I know that I do not speak to idle or foolish hearers. I speak to those who are not too proud to work for gratitude. Chiefs! You have worked for Tusitala, and he thanks you from his heart. In this, I could wish you could be an example to all Samoa—I wish every chief in these islands would turn to, and work, and build roads, and sow fields, and plant food trees, and educate his children and improve his talents—not for love of Tusitala, but for the love of his brothers, and his children, and the whole body of generations yet unborn.

"Chiefs! On this road that you have made many feet shall follow. The Romans were the bravest and greatest of people! mighty men of their hands, glorious fighters and conquerors. To this day in Europe you may go through parts of the country where all is marsh and bush, and perhaps after struggling through a thicket, you shall come forth upon an ancient road, solid and useful as the day it was made. You shall see men and women bearing their burdens along that even way, and you may tell yourself that it was built for them perhaps fifteen hundred years before,—perhaps before the coming of Christ,—by the Romans. And the people still remember and bless them for that convenience, and say to one another, that as the

Romans were the bravest men to fight, so they were the best at building roads.

"Chiefs! Our road is not built to last a thousand years, yet in a sense it is. When a road is once built, it is a strange thing how it collects traffic, how every year as it goes on, more and more people are found to walk thereon, and others are raised up to repair and perpetuate it, and keep it alive; so that perhaps even this road of ours may, from reparation to reparation, continue to exist and be useful hundreds and hundreds of years after we are mingled in the dust. And it is my hope that our far-away descendants may remember and bless those who laboured for them to-day."

INDEX TO THE LETTERS

Note. The volume numbers below refer to the *Letter* series (i-iv) and not to the *Edition* volume numbers (I-XXXII).

Abbé Coignard (France), *iv,* 293
Academy, The, i, 3, 194, 205, 234, 236, 242, 279; *ii,* 236, 257, 258; *iv,* 247
Ackergill Tower, *i,* 35
"Across the Plains," *iii,* 286; *iv,* 66, 86
"Actor's Wife, The," *ii,* 33
Adams, Henry, in Samoa, *iii,* 192, 217, 229, 233
Address to the Unco Guid (Burns), *i,* 341
Adelaide (Beethoven), *i,* 99, 261
Adirondack Mountains, stay in, *iii,* 3, 9, 12 *et seq.*
Admiral Benbow Inn ("Treasure Island"), *ii,* 51, 52
Admiral Guinea, play (with Henley), *ii,* 52, 210, 224, 225, 253, 254
"Adventures of David Balfour," proposed double volume of "Kidnapped" and "Catriona," entitled, *iv,* 249
"Adventures of John Delafield, The," projected novel, *ii,* 67, 68
Æneid (Virgil), *ii,* 296, 297; *iii,* 35, 82
"Æsthetic Letters" (Schiller), *ii,* 170
Ah perfido spergiuro!, song, *i,* 241
Ahrens, *iv,* 216
Ainsworth, Harrison, *ii,* 54
"Aladdin" (Pyle), *iv,* 23
Alais, visit to, *i,* 328
Alameda, ship, *iv,* 122, 129, 130
Alexander, J. W., *iii,* 19, 20; portrait of R.L.S. by, *ii,* 310, 311, 314
Allan, River, and Bridge of, *i,* 59, 61, 247
Allen, Grant, ballade of, *iii,* 19
"Amateur Emigrant, The," *i,* 354, 356, 358, 363, 370, 371, 374, 375-378, 384-386, 392, 396; *ii,* 8; *iv,* 280, 282, 298, 307
"Amazing Marriage, The" (Meredith), *iv,* 227, 275
Amory, Blanche ("Pendennis"), *ii,* 326
Anacreon, Overture to (Cherubini), *i,* 217
Anderson, Dr., *iv,* 341
André, Fred, letter to Thomas Stevenson from, *ii,* 111
Andrews, Mr. and Mrs., *i,* 127, 132
Andrews, Mrs., *i,* 164
Angelo, Michael, *iv,* 263, statuary of, *i,* 57, 65
Angus, W. Craibe, letters to, *iii,* 257, 277, 306
"Annals of the Persecution in Scotland" (Aikman), *i,* 40

Anstey, F., *ii,* 291; *iv,* 141
Anstruther (Fife), harbour works at, *i,* 25, 29, *et seq.*
"Antiquary, The" (Scott), *ii,* 190; *iv,* 13
Apaiang Island, *iii,* 136
Apemama, Gilbert Islands, *iii,* 136 *et seq.; iii,* 156, 159, 182, 183, 210, 273
Apia, *iii,* 68, famous hurricane at, 1889, *iii,* 121, 151; gratitude of prisoners at, *iv,* 250 *et seq.*
"Apology for Idlers, An," *i,* 300, 301, 304, 308
"Appeal to the Clergy of the Church of Scotland, The," *i,* 203, 205
Appin Murder, *ii,* 7, 286; *iv,* 19; projected article on, *ii,* 56, 57
Appleton, Dr. (*The Academy*), *i,* 3, 194, 205, 206, 238, 243, 261
"Arabian Nights," *i,* 383
Arbroath, Abbot of, *i,* 54
Archer, Thomas, *iv,* 270; letters to, *iii,* 77 (with William Archer), 82
Archer, William, *ii,* 210, 267, 268, 328; *iv,* 270; letters to, *ii,* 254, 263, 269, 270; *iii,* 17, 40, 42, 43, 77 (with Thomas Archer); *iv,* 268
Areia, Chief, *iii,* 88-91
Argan, *ii,* 228
Arnold, Matthew, *i,* 31; *ii,* 130
Arrick (or Arick), black boy, *iv,* 27, 65, 100, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 128, 201
"Art of Golf, The," *ii,* 347, 348
Arysule, *ii,* 228
As You Like It (Shakespeare), *ii,* 196, 271
Asceticism and Christianity, *i,* 318
"At Last" (Kingsley), *ii,* 204
Atalanta (magazine), *iv,* 146, 152
Athenæum, The London, i, 358; *ii,* 98, 101, 236, 316; *iii,* 163
Attwater ("Ebb-Tide"), *ii,* 12; *iv,* 174, 179, 233, 267
Atua, bombardment of, *iv,* 270, 310
Auckland, visits to, *iii,* 166, 168; *iv,* 162, 163, 220
Auld Lang Syne, German version of, *i,* 67, 165; air, *i,* 165
"Auld Licht Idyls, The" (Barrie), *iv,* 125, 246
Auntie's Skirts (*A Child's Garden of Verses*), *i,* 340
Aurelius, Marcus, *ii,* 293
Aurévilly, Barbey d', *ii,* 182; *iv,* 264
"Ausfürliche Erklärung der Hogarthischen Kupferstiche" (Lichtenberg), *i,* 263
"Autolycus at Court," *i,* 246
"Autumn Effect, An" ("Essays of Travel"), *i,* 222, 241; *iv,* 281, 282
Autun, *i,* 328, 332
Avignon, at, *i,* 115

Babington, Mrs. Churchill, *i,* 85; letter to, *i,* 55
Babington, Professor Churchill, *i,* 55, 57; *ii,* 235
Bacon, Francis, on "Time," *i,* 119
Bach, John Sebastian, music of, *ii,* 298, 309, 341
Baildon, H. B., letters to, *iii,* 244; *iv,* 261, 265
Baker, Mrs. A., letters to, *iv,* 248, 297
Baker, Shirley, of Tonga, *iii* 229, 233
Baker, Sir Samuel, *iv,* 34
Baker's, in the Adirondacks, *iii,* 15, 16, 20

Blakewell, Dr., letter to, *iv,* 309
Balfour, Amelia, *see* Jersey, Countess of
Balfour, David ("Kidnapped" and "Catriona"), *see* "David Balfour"
Balfour, Dr. George, *ii,* 55, 173, 345, 347
Balfour, Sir Graham, *i,* 5; *iii,* 192; *iv,* 3, 82, 84, 86, 87, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 113, 123, 124, 129, 163, 174, 182, 214, 217, 221, 222, 231, 234, 238, 245, 257, 267, 285, 287, 290, 298, 300, 316; Life of R.L.S. by, *i,* 5, 74
Balfour, James, *i,* 20
Balfour, Jane Whyte, letter to, *i,* 340
Balfour, Mrs. Lewis (Henrietta Smith), *i,* 20
Balfour, Rev. Lewis, *i,* 20
Balfour of Burley ("Old Mortality"), *i,* 191, n.
Balfour's Letters, *iv,* 165
Ballades, Rondeaus, etc. (edited by Gleeson White), dedication of, to R.L.S., *iii,* 18
Ballads, see South Sea Ballads
Ballads, 1890, iii, 75, 161, 177, 178
Balzac, Honoré de, *i,* 368, 383; *ii,* 15, 156, 157; *iv,* 12; quoted, *i,* 250; article on, by James, *iii,* 21
Bamford, Dr. W., *i,* 390; letter to, *i,* 391
Bancroft, *i,* 365
Bandmann, *iii,* 58
"Bannatyne, Mr. Pegfurth," *ii,* 88, 89
Banville, Théodore de, *i,* 243, 283
Barbara ("Catriona"), *iv,* 166, 167
Barbizon, at, *i,* 269, 277, 281-283, 301; *iv,* 321
"Baronial and Ecclesiastical Antiquities" (Billing), *iii,* 40
"Barrel Organ, The," *i,* 246
Barrie, Mrs. (Margaret Ogilvie), *iv,* 301
Barrie, Sir J. M., *iv,* 141, 142, 143; letters to, *iv,* 13, 125, 142, 245, 300, 302, 303, 304, 305
Bashville ("Cashel Byron's Profession"), *iii,* 41, 42
Basin (or Bazin), Thomas, works of, *i,* 300
"Bass Rock," projected essay, *i,* 309; *iv,* 20.
Basselin, Olivier, poems of, *i,* 288
Bates, Edward Hugh Higlee, *iv,* 268,
Bates, E. M. G., *iv,* 268
Bates, J. H., letter to, *iv,* 268
Bauble Shop, play (H. A. Jones), *iv,* 269
Baudelaire, Pierre Charles, *i,* 227, 267, 290
Baxter, Charles, *i,* 19, 106, 227, 255, 256, 307; *ii,* 84, 102, 144, 147, 175, 178; *iii,* 22, 37; *iv,* 32, 69, 74, 83, 84, 101, 137, 138, 177, 240, 254, 257, 288, 315; letters to, *i,* 59, 61, 74, 77, 80, 128, 289, 329, 381; *ii,* 8, 63, 67, 109, 226, 227, 311; *iii,* 21, 30, 38, 58, 70, 73, 78, 79, 98, 103, 119, 120, 150, 156, 165, 174, 241, 272, 309; *iv,* 35, 73, 138, 145, 160, 164, 221, 228, 243, 260, 276, 278, 317; scheme of, for Edinburgh Edition, *iv,* 254, 257, 260
Baxter, Edmund, death of, *iv,* 317
Baynes, Professor Spencer, *i,* 299
"Beach of Falesá, The," formerly "The High Woods

of Ulufanua" (*q.v.*), *iii,* 290, 310, 319, 326; *iv,* 3, 6, 11, 84, 86, 99, 101, 111, 127, 137, 140; illustrations to, *iv,* 96; marriage contract in, *iv,* 45 n, 96
"Beachcombers, The" (with Lloyd Osbourne), *iii,* 139
Beau Austin, play (with Henley), *ii,* 210, 342
Becker, Consul, *iii,* 329; *iv,* 5
Becket (Tennyson), *iv,* 269
Bedford College, *i,* 236
Bedtime, projected title for cycle in *A Child's Garden, ii,* 201
Beethoven, *i,* 241, 256, 294; *ii,* 161, 309, 310
"Beggars," *iii,* 4, 23; *iv,* 172
Bell, Joe, *iv,* 171
Bell Rock, book on, *ii,* 177; *iv,* 76, 194
Bell Rock Lighthouse, *i,* 19; *ii,* 226, 227
Bellairs, *iv,* 322
Bennet, Dr., *i,* 121, 131, 143
Bentley, publisher, *ii,* 62, 65, 73
Béranger, Pierre-Jean, article on, for "Encyclopædia Britannica," *i,* 281, 282, 286, 288
Berlioz, Essay on (Henley), *ii,* 43
Bernhardt, Sarah, acting of, *i,* 321
Berecchino, *i,* 159, 160, 171, 172, 251
"Bête Humaine, La" (Zola), *iii,* 179; *iv,* 190
Betterton, *ii,* 71
Bible, revisers of the, *ii,* 31
Bickford, Captain, R.N., *iv,* 217, 234
Birrell, *iv,* 71
Birse, Tibbie ("A Window in Thrums"), *iv,* 142, 245
Bismarck, quoted, *ii,* 246
"Black Arrow, The," *ii,* 95, 127, 151, 152, 165, 197, 198; *iii,* 17, 180, 181; *iv,* 260, 269
Black Boys, in Samoa, *iv,* 131, 132, 133, 201
"Black Canyon" (Lloyd Osbourne), *ii,* 75, 76
"Black Man and Other Tales, The," *ii,* 33, 34
Blackie, Professor, *i,* 53, 55; *ii,* 31
Blacklock, Consul, *iii,* 330
Blackwood's Magazine, i, 297, 298; *ii,* 57; *iii,* 151
"Blair of Balmyle," *iv,* 48, 49, 76
"Bloody Wedding, The," projected, *iii,* 254, 286
Bob, *see* Stevenson, Robert Alan Mowbray
Boccaccio, *iv,* 173
"Body-Snatcher, The," *ii,* 33, 41, 46, 230, 235; *iv,* 281
Bogue, *see* Walter
Bohn's Classics, *ii,* 15
Bonaparte, Napoleon, *ii,* 54 n.
"Bondage of Brandon, The" (Hemming), *ii,* 58
Boodle, Adelaide, *iii,* 271; *iv,* 109; letters to, *ii,* 348; *iii,* 29, 37, 54, 74, 115, 183, 270; *iv,* 6, 78, 294, 295
"Book of Martyrs" (Foxe), *i,* 264
"Book of Stories, A," projected contents, *i,* 246
Book of Verses (Henley), *iii,* 310; *iv,* 75
Bookman, iv, 178
Borrow, George, *ii,* 89, 177; *iv,* 162
Boswell, James, *i,* 288, 300; *ii,* 22; projected article on, *ii,* 59
"Bottle Imp, The," *iii,* 68, 253; *iv,* 137, 153, 223; Samoan translation of, *iii,* 252
Bough, Sam, *i,* 50-55; *ii,* 157
Bourget, Paul, *iii,* 319, 330; *iv,*

195; dedication of "Across the Plains" to, *iii,* 316; *iv,* 187
Bourke, Captain, R.N., *iv,* 124
Bournemouth, at, *ii,* 209 *et seq.*; *iii,* 156, 163, 191, 286
Bowles, Thomas Gibson, *i,* 332, 333
Bowyer, George Muggery, *iii,* 141, 142
Braille, books of R.L.S. to be issued in, *iv,* 249
Brash, the publican, *ii,* 63, 64
Brashiana, unpublished satiric verses, *ii,* 7, 109, 134
Braxfield ("Weir of Hermiston"), *iv,* 121, 123, 125, 126, 138, 337
Breck, Alan ("Kidnapped"), *ii,* 301, 306, 315, 317; *iii,* 21, 36, 330
Bremmer, Mr., *ii,* 259
Bronson, editor, *i,* 359
Brown, Dr., *ii,* 347
Brown, Dr. John, *ii,* 20, 21
Brown, Horatio F., letters to, *ii,* 27, 28
Brown, Rev. Dr., *iv,* 184
Brown, Mrs., *i,* 29, 34
Brown, R., Glasgow, *i,* 279, 319
Brown Box, The ("Dynamiter"), *ii,* 283, 284
Browne, Gordon, *iv,* 113, 173, 176, 177; letter to, *iv,* 113
Browne, Sir Thomas, *ii,* 15
Browning, Robert, *i,* 293; *ii,* 211, 316; *iii,* 262; *iv,* 190
Bruce, Michael, *i,* 105
Brummel, Beau, picture of, *ii,* 342
Bruno, Father, *iii,* 88, 110
Brussels, the *Parc* at, *i,* 62
Buchan, *i,* 71, 72
Buckle, Mrs., *ii,* 283, 284
Buckley, translator of "Sophocles" in Bohn's Classics, *ii,* 15
"Bucolics" (Virgil), *i,* 40
"Bullamacow," the term, *iv,* 132
"Bummkopf" (Stevenson's term for a pedant), *i,* 342
Bunner, H. C., *ii.* 160, 262
Bunyan, John, quoted, *ii,* 125; *iv,* 282; *see also* "Pilgrim's Progress"
Burke, Edmund, *i,* 105
Burlingame, E. L., Editor of *Scribner's Magazine, iii,* 3, 48, 122, 193, 222, 327; letters to, *iii,* 22, 24, 39, 43, 44, 95, 114, 148, 158, 169, 177, 212, 221, 276, 299, 300, 317; *iv,* 5, 32, 69, 75, 118, 127
Burn, Miss, *ii,* 188
Burne-Jones, Sir Edward, *i,* 341; *ii,* 203, 211, 316; *iv,* 278
Burney, "Admiral," *iv,* 135, 136
Burns, Robert, *i,* 20, 65, 68, 100, 163, 341; *ii,* 85, 160; *iii,* 25, 258, 259, 277, 230, 279, 280; article for "Encyclopædia Britannica" on, *i,* 268, 286-288, 299; Carlyle's essay on, *i,* 251; essay on, *i,* 214, 341-343, 356, 360, 364, 369, 382, 391, 392; *ii,* 271
Burt, *ii,* 16, 17, 22; projected article on, *ii,* 59
Bussard, ship, *iv,* 310
"By Proxy" (Payn), *ii,* 99
Byron, Lord, *i,* 49, 193; *ii,* 81; Carlyle quoted on, *i,* 252; Henley's essay on, *ii,* 43

Caine, Sir Hall, *iii,* 179
Caisso, Dr., *ii,* 99, 100
Caldecott, Randolph, *i,* 367, 386, 387
"Calton Hill" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Calvin, John, *i,* 185
Cameron, Captain, *iii,* 125, 126

Campagne Defli, *ii,* 93, 100 *et seq.,* 111, 112
Campbell of Glenure (Appin Murder), *ii,* 7, 57, 287
Campbell, Rev. Professor Lewis, *i,* 396; *ii,* 41, 227; letter to, *ii,* 219
Campbell, Thomas, *ii,* 18
Candish, Dr., *ii,* 160
"Cannonmills," *iii,* 185
Canoe Speaks, The (*Underwoods*), *ii,* 189, 348
"Canterbury Pilgrimage" (Pennell), dedication of, to R. L.S., *ii,* 255
"Capitaine Fracase, Le" (Gautier), *i,* 110
"Captain Singleton" (Defoe), *ii,* 203-205
Carbury, Lady ("Way of the World"), *i,* 323
Carlyle, Thomas, *i,* 251, 252, 334; *ii,* 26, 27, 242; *iii,* 302
Carr, J. Comyns (*English Illustrated Magazine*), *ii,* 165
Carrington, C. Howard, letter to, *ii,* 259
Carson, Mrs., *i,* 371
Casco, yacht, *iii,* 4, 58, 59, 62, 67 *et seq.,* 88, 89, 92 *et seq.,* 100-103
Case ("The Beach of Falesá"), *iv,* 113, 114
"Case Bottle, The," *ii,* 33
"Cashel Byron's Profession" (Shaw), *iii,* 40-42
Casparidea, unpublished satiric verses, *ii,* 7
Cassandra, nickname for Mrs. R.L.S. given by Thomas Stevenson, *ii,* 118, 119, 224
Cassell and Co., *ii,* 70, 215, 231; *iii,* 23, 246, 299, 313; *iv,* 6, 69, 96, 137, 152, 249
Cassell's *Family Paper, ii,* 316, 318
"Catriona" (at first "David Balfour," *q.v.*), *ii,* 56, 301; *iv,* 19, 77, 152, 167, 227, 235, 236, 249, 277
Cavalier (de Sonne), *ii,* 32
Cavalier, Jean, *ii,* 30-32
Cedercrantz, Conrad, Chief Justice, Samoa, *iii,* 194, 284, 288, 289, 291, 313, 314, 316; *iv,* 27, 30, 34, 99, 117, 141, 145, 149, 155, 211, 238, 246, 260, 264, 265, 346
Century Magazine, contributions to, *ii,* 65, 126, 151, 189, 222, 277, 279, 295, 314; *iii,* 19; article by James on R.L.S. in, *ii,* 160, 161; *iii,* 21
Cevennes, the, *ii,* 278
Chair of History and Constitutional Law, Edinburgh University, candidature for, *ii,* 5, 6, 34, *et seq.,* 43, 56, 61
Chalmers, Rev. James, *iii,* 218, 222, 245
"Chambers' Cyclopedia," *ii,* 173
Champneys, Basil, *i,* 236, 237
"Chapter of Artistic History, A," suggested title for book by Henley, *ii,* 43
"Chapter on Dreams, A," *see* "Dreams"
"Character of Dogs, The," *ii,* 164, 165
"Charity Bazaar, The," *iv,* 282
Charles of Orleans, Essay on, *i.* 277, 286, 287, 297, 299-301
Chart, Adela ("The Marriage"), *iii,* 297, 298
Charteris, Rev. Dr., letters to, *iii,* 46, 49
Chastity, *ii,* 84-87
"Chateaubriand" (Sainte-Beuve), *i,* 116
Chatto, Andrew, letter to, *ii,* 215
Chatto and Windus, Messrs., *ii,* 62, 80, 215; *iii,* 178, 241, 312; letter to, *ii,* 349

Chaucer, *i,* 51
Chepmell, Dr., *iii,* 12
Chester, visit to Cathedral at, *i,* 208
"Chevalier des Touches, Le" d'Aurévilly), *iv,* 185, 264
Child Life in Tahiti, *iii,* 82, 83
Children in the (Kilburn) Cellar, letter to, *iv,* 103, *see also* Boodle, Adelaide, letters to
Child's Garden of Verses, A, ii, 6, 95, 112-117, 120, 130, 150-152, 168, 191, 200, 202, 203, 210, 221, 245, 247, 248, 261; *iv,* 269; dedication of, to Alison Cunningham, *ii,* 113, 115, 141; illustrations for, *ii,* 115-117; projected illustrated edition of, *ii,* 221; review of, *ii,* 254, 255
"Child's Play," *ii,* 168; *iv,* 172
"Choice of Books" (Harrison), *iii,* 302
Christianity and asceticism, *i,* 318
"Christmas Books" (Dickens), *i,* 210
Christ's Hospital School, *ii,* 320, 321
Chrystal, Professor, *ii,* 223
Chuchullin, a dog, *ii,* 10
Cimourdain ("Quatre-vingt-treize"), *i,* 191 n.
"Clarissa Harlowe" (Richardson), *i,* 314
Clark, Sir Andrew, *i,* 86, 112, 113, 121, 179, 273; *ii,* 135
Clarke, Rev. W. E., London Missionary Society, *iii,* 198, 214, 218, 290; *iv,* 62, 86, 97, 212, 213, 342, 344
Claxton, missionary, *iii,* 252
Clinton (of *Young Folks*), ii, 57, 58
Clytie, bust of, *i,* 245, 246
Cockburn's "Memorials," *iv,* 138
Coggie, *see* Ferrier, Miss
Cole, Police-officer, *ii,* 246
Coleridge, S. T., *i,* 48, 334
"Collected Essays" (Huxley), *ii,* 332
Collins, Wilkie, *i,* 41, 357, 368; *ii,* 41
Collins, William, *ii,* 18
"Colonel Jack" (Defoe), *ii,* 203, 205
Colvin, Lady, *see* Sitwell, Mrs.
Colvin, Sir Sidney, *i,* 113, 125, 127, 129, 131-137, 140, 147, 155, 168, 171, 177-179, 194, 202, 215, 219, 224, 237, 238, 240, 241, 257, 262, 270, 320, 357; *ii,* 43, 78, 107, 144, 238, 301, 313, 330, 342, 343; *iii,* 48, 99, 119, 134, 175, 179, 238, 289, 290, 301, 311, 320, 330; *iv,* 67, 165, 180, 184, 227, 238, 273, 276, 299, 336; dedication to, *i,* 324; *ii,* 80; letters to, *i,* 110, 111, 157, 158, 160, 179, 187, 189, 201, 203, 205, 225, 243, 245, 250, 261, 263, 281, 286, 290, 291, 296, 299, 307, 317, 321, 342, 350, 351, 353, 354, 360, 363, 367, 370, 372, 377, 386, 388, 391, 392, 393, 395; *ii,* 8, 14, 22, 25, 33, 36, 41, 45, 67, 74, 111, 129, 151, 164, 167, 180, 200, 201, 203, 239, 242, 244, 296, 300, 307, 324, 332, 345; *iii,* 5, 6, 8, 33, 35, 45, 53, 56, 70, 71, 75, 92, 105, 112, 129, 135, 142, 167, 197, 213, 223, 236, 242, 247, 254, 264, 273, 279, 284, 292, 301, 310, 321; *iv,* 10, 14, 25, 37, 52, 70, 83, 90, 109, 119, 136, 152, 161, 163, 165, 171, 182, 207, 221, 229, 235, 250, 264, 266, 270, 280, 288, 298, 306, 314, 325, 332; letters of Mrs. R. L. Stevenson to, *iii,* 84, 123
Come Back (Clough), *ii,* 18

Come, my Corinna (Herrick), *ii,* 18
Commines, Philip de, *i,* 288
Comtesse d'Escarbagnas, La (Molière), *ii,* 228
"Comtesse de Rudolstadt" (Sand), *i,* 197
Congdon, L. C., *iv,* 268
Congreve, William, *ii,* 18
Conrad, Joseph, preference of "In the South Seas" to "Treasure Island" by, *iii,* 264
"Consuelo" (Sand), *i,* 125, 197
Contemporary Review, contributions to, *ii,* 250, 290, 346; *iv,* 282
Cook's "Voyages," *iv,* 229
Convention of Berlin, *iii,* 193, 194
Coolin, a Skye terrier, *ii,* 314, 315, 336
Cooper, William, letter to, *iii,* 269
Coppée, François, *i,* 243
"Coquelin," *i,* 396
Cormorant, ship, *iii,* 134
Corneille, Pierre, work of, *i,* 322
Cornhill Magazine, i, 3, 86, 87, 179, 185, 189, 191 n., 255, 258, 271, 279, 286, 287, 296, 298-301, 308, 312, 313, 315, 341, 342, 356, 357, 363, 375, 377, 382, 396; *ii,* 5, 41, 67, 79, 81, 82, 98, 112, 190; *iii,* 146; *iv,* 281
"Correspondence" (Wodrow), *ii,* 17
"Correspondence of Napoleon," *ii,* 235
Country Dance, A, *i,* 248, 249
Country Wife, The (Wicherley), *ii,* 186
Covenant ("Kidnapped"), *ii,* 286-289
Covenanters, the, *i,* 101
Cox, Police-officer, *ii,* 246
Crane, Walter, *i,* 317, 321; *ii,* 128
Crashaw, Essay on (Gosse), *ii,* 142, 143
Crawford, F. Marion, *iv,* 141
"Crawlers," term for tales of terror, *ii,* 51
"Crime et le Châtiment, Le" (Dostoieffsky), *ii,* 292, 293
"Crime Inconnu, Le" (Méry), *i,* 377
"Criminal Trials" (Arnot), *ii,* 57
Critic, The, magazine, *ii,* 161
"Critical Kitcats" (Gosse), *iii,* 5
Crockett, S. R., *iv,* 287, 305; letters to, *iii,* 50; *iv,* 177
"Croker Papers, The," *ii,* 235
"Cruise of the Silver Ship, The," *iii,* 76
Cumming, Miss Gordon, *iii,* 84
Cummy, *see* Cunningham, Alison
Cunningham, Alison, *i,* 20, 43, 44, 128; *ii,* 103, 117, 123, 203; letters to, *i,* 58; *ii,* 66, 112, 140, 275, 308, 312, 315, 318, 336; *iv,* 242, 329
Curaçoa, H.M.S., *iv,* 47, 61, 95, 96, 134, 135, 136, 258, 273, 289, 291, 293, 300, 310, 331, 335, 336
"Curate of Anstruther's Bottle, The," *i,* 160, 161, 246
Curtin Affair, the, in Ireland, *ii,* 212, 337-341, 343, 344
Cusack-Smith, Sir Berry, *iv,* 217
"Custaloga," *ii,* 316

Dalgleish, Dr. Scott, of Ballantyne Memorial Committee, *iv,* 277
Damien, Father, *iii,* 68, 69, 125, 130, 132, 134, 164, 186, 187, 312
"Damned Ones of the Indies, The" (Méry), *i,* 377
Damon, Rev. F., *iii,* 164

"Dance of Death" (Rowlandson), *iv,* 156, 165
"Dancing Children" ("Notes on the Movement of Young Children"), *iv,* 281, 282
Darien affair, books on, *iv,* 244
Darwin, Charles, *i,* 89, 175; *ii,* 272; *iii,* 234
Daudet Alphonse, *iii,* 320; work of, *ii,* 73; James's article on, *iii,* 21
David, ii, 71
"David Balfour" (title given to "Kidnapped" and "Catriona," *q.v.*), *ii,* 299, 301, 312, 315; *iii,* 185, 235, 297; *iv,* 3, 14, 17, 19, 22, 25, 26, 31, 35, 46, 48, 50, 51, 60, 61, 62, 70, 76, 77, 83, 84, 86, 87, 95, 96, 101, 111, 125, 140, 146, 152, 161, 170, 173, 177, 182, 188, 234, 240, 260, 263; character of, *ii,* 286-289, 301, 306, 308, 317
Davis, Dr., from Savaii, *iii,* 220
Davos, papers on life and climate of (*Pall Mall Gazette*), *ii,* 5
Davos Press, the, *ii,* 7, 57, 59, 60, 72, 78; *iii,* 14
Deacon Brodie, play (with Henley), *i,* 280, 376; *ii,* 103, 201, 202, 205, 224, 347; *iii,* 18, 19, 31, 32
"Dead Man's Letter, The," projected, *i,* 368; *ii,* 34
"Death in the Pot," *iv,* 186
"Débâcle" (Zola), *iv,* 110, 111, 190, 263
"Decisions of the Lords of the Council" (Fountainhall), *iv,* 165, 218
"Defence of Idlers, A," *i,* 300, 301; *see also* "Apology for Idlers"
Defoe, Daniel, works of, *ii,* 203, 205
"Delafield," *iii,* 244
"Demi-Monde" (Dumas *fils*), *iii,* 43
De Quincey, Thomas, biography of (Japp), *ii,* 46
Deronda, Daniel, *i,* 314
Descamps, Maxime, *iii,* 188
Desprez, Madame ("Treasure of Franchard"), *iii,* 180
"Devil on Cramond Sands, The," *i,* 246, 368; *ii,* 33
Dew-Smith, A. G., *ii,* 258; *iii,* 283; letter in verse to, *ii,* 12
Dewar, Sir James, *i,* 379 n., 380 n.
Dewar family, *i,* 127
"Dialogue on Character and Destiny," *i,* 376, 385
"Dialogue on Man, Woman, and Clarissa Harlowe, A," projected work, *i,* 314
Diana of the Ephesians, projected play, *i.* 179, 180
Dick, Mr., *i,* 303, 311, 330; *ii,* 242; letter to, *ii,* 183
Dickens, Charles, *i,* 210; *ii,* 118, 119; *iii,* 193; *iv,* 286; Henley's article on, *ii,* 61
Dickon Crookback ("The Black Arrow"), *iii,* 180
"Dictionary of Music" (Grove), *i,* 214
Didier, Father, *iii,* 255
Dilke, Lady, *i,* 132, 134
Dilke, Sir Charles, *i,* 131
Dobell, Dr., *ii,* 314, 347
Dobson, Austin, *ii,* 31, 319; letter to, *ii,* 230
Dodd, Loudon ("The Wrecker"), *iii,* 212; *iv,* 30, 262, 322
"Dogs" (Mayhew), *ii,* 68
Don Juan (Byron), *ii,* 81
Don Juan, play planned and begun with W. E. Henley, *i,* 375-377
Donat, *iii,* 88
Dostoieffsky, *ii,* 292, 293

Dover, T. W., letter to, *iv,* 68
Dowden, Professor, *ii,* 324, 325
Dowdney, *iii,* 327
Dowson, Mr., *i,* 123, 126, 150
Doyle, Sir A. Conan, *iv,* 314; letters to, *iv,* 170, 219, 222, 313
"Dreams, A Chapter on," *iii,* 4
Droppers, Garrett, letter to, *ii,* 334
Drum, Brabazon, pseudonymn, *ii,* 112
Drummond, Mrs. L., *i,* 236
"Drunkard and the Sea, The," *i,* 266
Dryden, John, *ii,* 18; *iii,* 250; odes of, *ii,* 15
Du Schönes Fischermädchen (Schubert), *i,* 201
Dumas, Alexandre (*père*), *i,* 383; *ii,* 74, 217, 262, 263; *iii,* 41, 42, 181, 239; *iv,* 77, 184, 223; essay on, by Henley, *ii,* 151; *iii,* 26
Dumbarton Drums, air, *i,* 171
Dunnet, *iii,* 296
Dunoyer, Olympe, *ii,* 31
Dutra, Augustin, *i,* 359
Dutton, of leper settlement, *iii,* 132
Dyce of Ythan, *iv,* 30, 31; *see also* "The Young Chevalier"
Dying Christian to his Soul, The (Pope), *ii,* 18
"Dynamiter, The" (with Mrs. R.L.S.), *ii,* 220, 283, 284

Earthly Paradise, The (Morris), *i,* 61
Easter Island, images from, *iii,* 143, 147
"Ebb-Tide, The" (with Lloyd Osbourne) (called also "The Pearl Fisher," and "The Schooner Farallone," *q.v.*), *iv,* 150, 173, 174, 175, 177, 178, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 193, 194, 229, 231, 233, 236, 254, 267
Eclogues (Virgil), *i,* 59
Edinburgh, articles on, *i,* 315
Edinburgh Academy, *i,* 21; *ii,* 74; Old Boys' Dinner, *i,* 244
Edinburgh Edition of Works, *iv,* 260, 278, 279, 280
"Edinburgh Eleven" (Barrie), *iv,* 142
Edinburgh Society of Arts, award to R.L.S. by, *i,* 26
Edinburgh University, R.L.S. at, *i,* 24
Edinburgh University Speculative Society. *See* Speculative Society.
Eeles, Lieutenant, R.N., *iv,* 95, 337; letters to, *iv,* 133, 336
"Egoist, The" (Meredith), *ii,* 80
Einst, O wunder einst, i, 99
"Elements of Style," *ii,* 290
Elgin Marbles, The, *i,* 225-227, 230, 231
Eliot, George, *i,* 155, 313, 383
"Emerson" (James), *iii,* 48
"Emigrant Train, The," *iii,* 286
Empire Review, i, 5
"Encyclopædia Britannica," articles written for, *i,* 268, 281, 282, 286, 299
"Endymion," *ii,* 278
"Engineer's Thumb, The" (Doyle), *iv,* 222, 223
English Odes, edited by Gosse, advice regarding, *ii,* 15-18
"English Worthies" (edited by Lang), *ii,* 239
"Ensorcelée, L'" (Aurévilly), *iv,* 264
"Eothen" (Kinglake), *iii,* 124
Epilogue to "An Inland Voyage," *ii,* 164
Epitaphs for himself, by R.L.S., *i,* 387; *ii,* 167

Equator, schooner, *iii,* 68, 116, 119, 123, 135 *et seq.,* 139 *et seq.,* 150
Eroica Symphony (Beethoven), *i,* 241
Escape at Bedtime (*A Child's Garden*), *ii,* 152
Espiègle, ship, *iii,* 134
"Essays in London" (James), *iv,* 250
"Essays of Travel," *i,* 296; *ii,* 5
"Essays on Art" (Hamerton), *i,* 361
"Essays on the Enjoyment of the World," projected, *i,* 204-206
"Etherege, Essay on," *ii,* 142
"Evictions" (Hugh Miller), *ii,* 21
Ewald's "History," *ii,* 201
Ewing, Professor, *ii,* 343
Examiner, The, i, 341
"Expansion of England" (Seeley), *ii,* 151

F. A. S., In Memoriam (*Underwoods*), *ii,* 25
Faauma, *iii,* 280, 281, 295, 314, 315, 328; *iv,* 14, 28, 50, 63, 120, 204, 205, 206
"Fables," *i,* 203, 205
Fables in Song (Lytton), *i,* 187, 188, 189, 193
Fairchild, Blair, *iii,* 8, 187
Fairchild, Charles, *iii,* 177; *iv,* 25; letter to, *iii,* 16
Fairchild, Mrs. Charles, *iv,* 24, 263; letters to, *iii,* 186; *iv,* 22, 101
Fairchild, Mr. and Mrs., *iii,* 3, 7, 8, 20
Falke, ship, *iv,* 310
"Familiar Essays," *ii,* 347
"Familiar Studies of Men and Books," *i,* 212, 341, 348; *ii,* 61, 78, 82; *iii,* 114; *see also* "Men and Books"
"Family of Engineers, Memoirs (or Records) of a," *ii,* 226; *iii,* 284, 305; *iv,* 187, 231, 241
"Family of Love, The," *i,* 246
Fanua, *see* Gurr, Mrs.
"Fastidious Brisk," *ii,* 170
Fates, the three, *i,* 226, 227, 230, 231
Faust (Goethe), *ii,* 170
Feast of Famine, The, iii, 75, 93, 97, 106
Femmes Savantes, Les (Molière), *ii,* 228
Fenian dynamite outrages, *ii,* 45
Fergusson, Robert, *iii,* 245, 258, 259, 277, 279, 280
Ferrier, James Walter, *i,* 76, 337; *ii,* 144, 169, 170; *iii,* 310; appreciation of, *ii,* 145-147, 149, 159, 160; collaboration with, *iv,* 282; death of, *ii,* 95, 143, 146, 156, 158, 167; and "Old Mortality," *ii,* 196; and "Viol and Flute," *ii,* 200; letter to, *i,* 388
Ferrier, Miss (Coggie), *ii,* 144, 190, 196, 260; letters to, *ii,* 143, 148, 169, 188, 226, 237; *iii,* 52
Fielding, Henry, *i,* 190 n., 368; *ii,* 70, 72; *iv,* 263
"Finsbury Tontine, The," or "The Game of Bluff," original title of "The Wrong Box," *q.v., iii,* 19, 27
Fisherman's Child, The, iii, 141
Flaubert, Gustave, *i,* 213; *ii,* 15; *iii,* 188, 260; *iv,* 175; letters of, *iii,* 248
Fleming, Marjorie, *iv,* 269; quoted, *iii,* 15 n.
Fletcher, *i,* 51
Flowers of the Forest, The, air, *i,* 164
"Folk Lore" (Lang), *ii,* 235

Folleté, Monsieur, *i,* 141, 142, 166
"Fontainebleau" (afterwards "Forest Notes," *q.v.*), *i,* 271, 272, 281, 293, 296-298; *ii,* 128, 153, 154, 164, 165; *iii,* 286
Foo, *iii,* 134
"Footnote to History, A," *iii,* 143, 192, 313, 327, 330; *iv,* 3, 4, 5, 22, 26, 31, 46, 86, 118, 128, 140, 260
Forbes, Duncan, *ii,* 16
"Foreigner at Home, The," *i,* 88
"Forest Notes" ("Fontainebleau," *q.v.*), *i,* 271, 272, 293, 296-299; *iv,* 281, 282
"Forest State, The: A Romance," *i,* 378, 384, 385; *see also* "Prince Otto"
"Forester" (Ferrier), unfinished paper, *i,* 388
Fortnightly Review, The, i, 187, 298, 386; *ii,* 5; *iii,* 47
Fortune by Sea and Land (Heywood), *ii,* 81
Fortune, Mr. and Mrs., *i,* 31, 34
Foss, Captain, *iii,* 295
"Four Great Scotsmen," project for, *i,* 163
Fra Diavolo, performance at Frankfurt, *i,* 68
France, Anatole, work of, *iv,* 193, 293
Franklin, Benjamin, life of (Parton), *ii,* 59; (Bigelow), *ii,* 59; projected essay on, *i,* 372, 384, 385; *ii,* 58
Fraser, Simon ("Catriona"), *iv,* 233
Fraser's Magazine, iii, 312
French and English characters contrasted, *ii,* 139
"French in Hindustan, The," *iii,* 39
"Friend, The" (Coleridge), *i,* 334
"Fruits of Solitude" (Penn), *ii,* 27, 28
Funk, Dr., *iv,* 300, 341

G. O. M., appellation for Gladstone, *ii,* 242-244
Galitzin, Prince Leon, *i,* 170, 171, 173-175, 180
Galpin, Mr., *ii,* 315, 316
"Game of Bluff, A," *iii,* 53, 96; *see* "The Wrong Box"
Garschine, Madame, *i,* 138, 139, 143-146, 149, 151-155, 160, 167, 168, 170, 176, 188, 210, 224, 251
Gautier, James's article on, *iii,* 21
Gauvain ("Quatre - vingt - treize"), *i,* 191 n.
Gavottes Célèbres (Litolf), *ii,* 298
Gebir (Landor), quoted, *ii,* 54
"Genesis of the Master of Ballantrae," *iii,* 35
"Gentleman of France, A" (Weyman), *iv,* 184
"George the Pieman" (*Deacon Brodie*), *i,* 376
Gibbon, projected play from, *i,* 178
Gilbert Islanders, burial customs of, *iii,* 182
Gilbert Islands, *iii,* 68, 135 *et seq.,* 149, 159, 166; plan of projected papers on, *iii,* 274
Gilder, Richard Watson (editor of *Century Magazine*), *ii,* 65, 122, 125, 126, 160, 199, 256, 295; *iii,* 20
Gilfillan, Mr., *iii,* 125, 128
Ginger, a cat, *ii,* 342, 343
Gladstone, William, *i,* 165; *ii,* 230, 236, 242-244, 246, 307; *iii,* 304
"Gleams of Memory" (Payn), *iv,* 331

Glencorse Church, *i,* 271; *iv,* 178, 179
"Go-Between, The," *iv,* 186
Goethe, *i,* 92, 93, 152
Golden Legend, The (Longfellow), *i,* 33
Good Boy, A (*A Child's Garden*), *ii,* 152, 168
Gordon, General, *ii,* 244, 246, 293, 338; *iii,* 122, 245
Gosse, Edmund, *ii,* 36, 41, 53, 60, 67, 82, 132, 310; *iii,* 5, 319; *iv,* 71, 340; appointment of, as Clark Reader at Cambridge, *ii,* 198; letters to, *i,* 333, 335, 341, 343, 355, 362, 364, 379, 389; *ii,* 15, 17, 30, 37, 38, 49, 50, 57, 65, 77, 86, 87, 122, 125, 126, 142, 147, 187, 198, 229, 247, 280, 290; *iii,* 13, 47, 259; *iv,* 188, 338
Gosse, Mrs. Edmund, *i,* 342, 366, 381; *ii.* 39, 58, 282; *iii,* 259; letter to, *ii,* 75
"Gosse, P. H., Life of" (Gosse), *iii,* 259, 260; *iv,* 188
"Gossip on Romance, A," essay, *ii,* 6, 67-69
Grange, Lady, *ii,* 16, 22
Grant, Geordie, *i,* 42
Grant, Lady, *ii,* 150, 170
Grant, Miss ("Catriona"), *iv,* 61, 161, 166
Grant, Sir Alexander *ii,* 41, 150, 170; death of, *ii,* 237
Grant, Mrs., of Laggan, *ii,* 22; projected article on, *ii,* 59
"Grape from a Thorn, A" (Payn), *ii,* 99
Gray, Thomas, essay on, by Gosse, in "English Men of Letters," *ii,* 65, 77, 78, 87, 88; Gosse edition of works of, *ii,* 247
"Great Expectations" (Dickens), projected play upon, *ii,* 118
"Great North Road, The," unfinished story, *ii,* 53, 211, 231, 232, 245, 259; *iii,* 185; *iv,* 229
Green, Madame, singer, *iv,* 110
"Green, Miss," pseudonym for Miss Boodle, *iii,* 184, 185, 186
Greenaway, Kate, *ii,* 128
"Greville's Memoirs," *ii,* 240
Grey, Sir George, *iv,* 162, 163, 171
"Greyfriars" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Grove, Sir George (*Macmillan's Magazine*), *i,* 3, 86, 214, 261, 300
Guérin, Maurice de, *i,* 236
Gurr, banker of Samoa, *iii,* 237, 305; *iv,* 129, 332
Gurr, Mrs., *iii,* 296
Guthrie, Charles J., *i,* 60; letters to, *ii,* 37, 38, 285
"Guy Mannering" (Scott), *ii,* 190; *iv,* 25

Haddon, Tommy ("The Wrecker"), *iv,* 134
Haddon, Trevor, letters to, *ii,* 84, 87, 104, 136, 192
Haggard, Bazett, *iii,* 327; *iv,* 62, 88, 89, 90, 95, 96, 97, 99
Haggard, Rider, *iii,* 27, 31, 276; *iv,* 29, 30, 52, 65, 82, 83
Haggard, Thomas ("A Window in Thrums"), *iv,* 142
"Hair Trunk, The," *i,* 304, 305
Hake, Dr. Gordon, *iii,* 9
Hall, Mr. ("Clarissa Harlowe"), *i,* 314
Hallam, works of, *i,* 104
Hallé, Sir Charles, *i,* 244, 294
Hamerton, Philip Gilbert (*The Portfolio*), *i,* 3, 86, 90, 204 n., 328, 331; *ii,* 41; letters to, *i,* 361; *ii,* 39, 61, 250

Hamerton, Mrs. P. G., *ii,* 41, 63, 251
Hamilton, Captain, death of, *iii,* 253, 254
Hamilton, Mary, *iii,* 253
Hamlet (Shakespeare), *iii,* 239, 240
Hammond, Basil, *ii,* 105, 107
Hand, Captain, *iv,* 5
Handel, G. F., *ii,* 15
Hansome, Rufe, *i,* 396
Hardy, Thomas, *ii,* 261; *iv,* 127
Hargrove, Mr., *i,* 51
"Harold," *i,* 323; *iii,* 315
Harrison, Frederic, *iii,* 302
Harte, Bret, *i,* 313
Harvard Monthly, ii, 334
"Harvest of a Quiet Eye, The," *ii,* 292
Hawkins, Jim ("Treasure Island"), *ii,* 228
"Hawthorne" (James), *i,* 391, 396
Hayley, *i,* 371
Hazlitt, William, *ii,* 89; *iv,* 268; projected life of, *ii,* 6, 62, 65, 72, 75
"Heart of Midlothian, The" (Scott), *i,* 100; *iv,* 13
"Heathercat," unfinished story, *iv,* 150, 244, 287
Hecky, a dog, *ii,* 312
Hegel, *ii,* 174
Heintz, Dr., *i,* 363
Helen of Vailima, *iv,* 28
Henderson, Mr., editor of *Young Folks, ii,* 53, 127
Henderson, Mr., schoolmaster, *i,* 21
Henley, Anthony, *i,* 357, 360
Henley, E. J., *iii,* 31
Henley, W. E., *i,* 184, 248, 255, 258-260, 279, 280, 281, 297, 305, 323, 367, 371, 374; *ii,* 46, 67, 82, 102, 125, 130, 149, 152, 155, 156, 158, 164, 182, 202, 210, 212, 215, 224, 258, 260, 301, 312, 316, 343; *iii,* 31, 72, 79, 158, 312; *iv,* 74, 311; dedication to, *ii,* 8, 80; letters to, *i,* 302, 329, 332, 333, 336, 352, 357, 368, 374, 375, 384; *ii,* 42, 44, 51, 53, 55, 60, 68, 69, 79, 88, 113, 119, 127, 128, 130, 132, 133, 144, 150, 153, 162, 170, 178, 191, 196, 204, 216, 220, 225, 228, 231, 236, 238, 252, 254, 262, 346; *iii,* 9, 18, 26; *iv,* 74
Henry (Simelé), Samoan boy, *iii,* 152, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 207, 214, 215, 216, 218, 220, 236, 265, 266, 268, 280, 293, 294, 295, 314; *iv,* 62, 63, 66, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 123, 124, 128, 129, 154, 155, 158, 222, 223, 235, 239
"Henry Shovel," *iii,* 272; *see also* "The Shovels of Newton French"
Herbert, George, poetry of, *i,* 40
Heron, yacht, *i,* 202
Herrick, Robert, *ii,* 132, 181; essay on (Gosse), *ii,* 142
Hester Noble, play planned and begun with W. E. Henley, *i,* 375-377, 385
Hey, Johnnie Cope, air, *i,* 165
Heywood, *ii,* 81
"High Woods of Ulufanua, The" (renamed "The Beach of Falesá," *q.v.*), *iii,* 192, 208, 214, 265, 286, 291, 292, 309, 311, 320, 327; *iv,* 3, 6, 11, 46, 84, 86, 96, 99, 101, 111, 113, 127, 137, 140, 152, 153
Highland history, projected work on, *ii,* 5, 16, 21, 22
"Highland Widow, The" (Scott), *iii,* 212
Hilbury, Mrs., *i,* 22
Hiroshigé prints, *i,* 225
"Histoire d'Israel" (Renan), *ii,* 176

"History of France" (Martin), *i,* 288
"History of the Great Rebellion" (Clarendon), *i,* 56
"History of the Great Storm" (Defoe), *ii,* 203
"History of Henry IV," *ii,* 235, 236
"History of Indostan" (Orme), *iv,* 304, 307
"History of Notorious Pirates" (Johnson), *ii,* 204
"History of the Plague" (Defoe), *ii,* 203
"History of the United States" (Bancroft), *i,* 365
Hogarth, William, *i,* 103; Colvin's Cambridge lectures on, *i,* 263
Hokusai, article in *Magazine of Art, ii,* 128, 153
Hole, W., R.S.A., *iii,* 40, 95, 98, 122, 232
Holiday, Mrs., *i,* 194, 195
Holy Fair, The (Burns), *i,* 20; *iii,* 34
"Homme qui rit, L'" (Hugo), *i,* 179
Honolulu, stay at, 95 *et seq.,* 116 *et seq.; iii,* 165
Horace, *i,* 121, 338; *iii,* 25, 241
Horatian Ode (Marvell), *ii,* 16
Hoskyn, Dr., *iv,* 95, 134, 136, 198
Houghton, Lord, *ii,* 68
"House of Eld, The" ("Fables"), *i,* 28, 204
Howe, Miss ("Clarissa Harlowe"), *i,* 314
"Huckleberry Finn" (Twain), *ii,* 245
Hugo, Victor, work of, *i,* 190 n., 191 n.; *see also* "Victor Hugo's Romances," *iii,* 179
Huguenots, Les (Meyerbeer), *i,* 295
Huish ("The Ebb-Tide"), *iv,* 185, 232, 332
"Human Compromise, The," *i,* 385
"Humble Apology, A" (*Longman's Magazine*), *ii,* 290
"Humble Remonstrance, A" (*Longman's Magazine*), *ii,* 232, 234
Hume, David, *i,* 20, 106, 163; *ii,* 160
"Humiliés et Offensés" (Dostoieffsky), *ii,* 293
Hunt, *iv,* 41
Hunter, Robert, *iv,* 172
Hutchinson, bust of R.L.S. by, *iv,* 236
Hutchinson, Lucy, *i,* 55-57
Huxley's "Collected Essays," *ii,* 332
Hyde, Rev., Dr., of Honolulu, *iii,* 69, 164, 165, 173, 185, 186, 187
Hyères, *ii,* 94-96, 117 *et seq.,* 121, 209
Hyndman, *ii,* 248

Iceland, suggested book on, by Gosse, *ii,* 58
Ich unglückselige Atlas (Schubert), *i,* 201
Ide, Annie H., birthday document sent to, *iii,* 278; letter to, *iii,* 307
Ide, H. C., Land Commissioner and later Chief Justice of Samoa, *iii,* 278; letter to, *iii,* 278
Ide, Margery, *iv,* 334
Idler, The, magazine, *iv,* 314
Il Penseroso (Milton), *ii,* 18
Illustrated London News, iv, 173, 220
"In a Garden," *i,* 266
In the Garden, projected title for cycle in *A Child's Garden, ii,* 201
In Russet and Silver (Gosse), dedication of, to R.L.S., *iv,* 338

"In the South Seas," *iii,* 67, 69, 71, 73, 80, 93, 97, 136, 149, 150; plan of, 142-146; *see also* South Sea Letters
Inchcape Bell, *i,* 54
Indian Mutiny, the, projected novel on, *iii,* 54
Inglis, John, Justice-General, *i,* 272
Ingram, John H., *i,* 234, 242
"Inland Voyage, An," *i,* 277, 279, 299, 302, 316, 317, 321, 324, 325, 328, 331, 333, 348, 366; *ii,* 20, 82, 135, 164, 205
Inn Album, The (Browning), *i,* 293, 294
Iona, ship, *i,* 44-46
Ippolita ("When the Devil was Well"), *i,* 242
Ireland and Irish Affairs, *see* Curtin Affair
Ireland, Alexander, *ii,* 75; letter to, *ii,* 72
Irving, Henry, *ii,* 71; *iv,* 232
"Island Nights' Entertainment," *iv,* 137, 153, 161, 183
"Isle of Voices, The," *iv,* 137
"Ivanhoe" (Scott), *ii,* 127

Jack, the island horse, *iii,* 198, 199, 218, 223, 224, 229, 230, 303, 315, 322, 324, 331; *iv,* 28, 41, 109, 174, 203, 204, 306
Jacko, a monkey, *iii,* 7
James, Henry, *ii,* 210, 262, 292; *iii,* 5, 41, 72, 92, 137, 163, 179, 217, 234, 298, 319; *iv,* 188, 212, 219, 293, 299, 336; literary controversy with, *ii,* 232-234, 239, 249; letters to, *ii,* 232, 267, 327, 329; *iii,* 7, 19, 32, 48, 62, 110, 163, 179, 232, 297, 319; *iv,* 140, 192, 218, 249, 290
James, Williams, *ii,* 334; *iii,* 300
Jamieson, Jamie, *i,* 47
Janet Nicoll, s.s., *iii,* 69, 167, 168, 169, 175, 186, 199, 242; *iv,* 176
Japan, *i,* 305, 306
Japp, Dr. Alexander, *ii,* 54; letters to, *ii,* 46, 53, 78
Jenkin family, *i,* 141, 257, 300
Jenkin, Professor Fleeming, *i,* 25, 50; *ii,* 10, 36, 67, 80, 82, 144; *iii,* 12, 28, 42, 106, 244; *iv,* 295
death of, *ii,* 211, 256-258
"Memoir of Fleeming Jenkin," *ii,* 211, 276, 282, 298, 329, 341, 342, 343, 346; *iii,* 28
Jenkin, Mrs. Fleeming, *i,* 26, 50; *ii,* 341; *iii,* 76; letters to, *ii,* 256, 258, 297, 337, 343; *iii,* 28; *iv,* 139
Jerome, Jerome K., *iv,* 254
"Jerry Abershaw," projected, *ii,* 53, 54, 218, 259
Jersey, Countess of, in Samoa, *iv,* 4, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 103; letters to, *iv,* 81, 83
Jersey, Earl of, *iv,* 160
Jhering, Professor, *i,* 174, 175, 180
J. L. Tiernan, schooner, *iii,* 137
Joan of Arc, *i,* 300; *ii,* 81
Jock o' Hazeldean, air, *i,* 165
"John Knox and his Relations with Women," *i,* 212-214, 220, 221, 225, 227, 242, 245, 247, 250
John Peel (of the song), *i,* 54
John Williams, missionary barque, *iii,* 169
"Johnson" or "Johnstone," pseudonym, *ii,* 63, 109, 110; *iii,* 39; letter in character of, *ii,* 228; *see also* Thomson
Johnson, Samuel, *ii,* 22; Boswell's Life of, *ii,* 288, 300

Johnstone, Marie, Mary, or May, *i*, 135, 137, 139, 140, 142, 150
Johnstone, Mr., *i*, 162, 164
Johnstone, Mr. and Mrs., *i*, 140, 147
Jolly Beggars, The (Burns), sent to R.L.S. to be autographed, *iii*, 258
Jones, Henry Arthur, letter to, *ii*, 239
Jonson, Ben, *ii*, 18
"Joseph Andrews" (Fielding), *ii*, 72
Jota Aragonese (Glinka), *i*, 217
Journalism, *i*, 279
Jowett, Master of Balliol, *ii*, 303, 313
Juden, Die (*La Juive*), performance at Frankfurt, *i*, 72
Julius Cæsar (Shakespeare), *i*, 158; *iv*, 262
Jura, Skye terrier, *iv*, 313
"Justice-Clerk, The," *iv*, 139, 153, 156, 164, 165, 276, 340; *see also* "Weir of Hermiston"
Juvénal des Ursins, *i*, 288
"Juvenilia," *iv*, 282

Kaiulani, Princess, *iii*, 121, 122
Kalakaua, King, *iii*, 96, 99, 104, 119
Katoomba, H.M.S., *iv*, 217, 234
Kava (or Ava), *iv*, 41, 92 *et seq.*; 237-238
Kant, *ii*, 272
Keats, John, *i*, 343; *iv*, 340; essay on, in "English Men of Letters" (Colvin), *ii*, 67, 68, 77, 78, 324; suggested illustrations to poems of, *ii*, 278
Keir, Jean, *iv*, 218, 284
"Kenilworth" (Scott), *ii*, 190
"Kidnapped," *i*, 50; *ii*, 56, 211, 253, 254, 305, 308, 310, 315, 316-318; *iii*, 3, 35, 93, 150, 158, 240; *iv*, 19, 22, 76, 111, 152, 173, 234, 249; course of David Balfour's wanderings in, *ii*, 286-289, 301; *see also* "David Balfour"
Killigrew, Anne, *ii*, 15 n.
"King Matthias's Hunting Horn," *i*, 226, 228, 238, 245, 246; *ii*, 33
Kingero, Mr., letters to, *i*, 305, 315
Kinglake, W., *i*, 104; *iii*, 124; *iv*, 17
"King's Pest" (Poe), *i*, 233
Kipling, Rudyard, *ii*, 32, 33; *iii*, 179, 234, 294, 300; *iv*, 74, 141, 263; letter to, *iii*, 235; projected visit to Vailima by, *iv*, 22, 24
Kitchener, *iv*, 97
Knappe, Consul, *iii*, 151, 327, 329, 330
Knox, John, essay on, *i*, 86, 93, 96, 163, 170, 204, 209-211, 221; *ii*, 59, 79; *iii*, 277, works of, *i*, 171; *see also* "John Knox and his Relations with Women"
Ko-o-amua, Chief, *iii*, 70
Kubla Khan (Coleridge), *i*, 130, 334
Kuniyoshi prints, *i*, 225
Kunst, *iii*, 195

L.J.R. essay club, *i*, 74, 76
Labiche, *i*, 358, 369
"Labour Slave, The," *iii*, 286
Lacy, Mr., *ii*, 32
"Lady Barberina" (James), *ii*, 233
Lafaele, Samoan, *iii*, 203, 206, 207, 228, 236, 265, 280, 314; *iv*, 14, 15, 18, 20, 28, 50, 65, 66, 91, 120, 206
La Farge, John, in Samoa, *iii*, 192, 217, 229, 233; *iv*, 42

Lake Isle of Innisfree (Yeats), *iv,* 274
L'Allegro (Milton), *ii,* 18
Lamb, Charles, *i,* 312; *ii,* 153, 185, 186
Lamia (Keats), illustrated edition (Low), dedication of, to R.L.S., *ii,* 249, 277-279
Lampman, Archibald, sonnet of, *iii,* 97
Landor, Walter Savage, *ii,* 52; volume in "English Men of Letters" series by Colvin, *ii,* 42, 45, 46, 68
"Landscape" (Hamerton), *ii,* 250, 251
Lang, Andrew, *i,* 165, 167, 169; *ii,* 36, 41, 211, 239, 319; *iii,* 18, 27, 31, 162, 170; *iv,* 190, 305, 311; appreciation of "Treasure Island," *ii,* 164; letters to, *iii,* 182; *iv,* 76, 337
"Lantern Bearers, The," *iii,* 4, 24, 286; *iv,* 172
Lapraik, Tod ("Catriona"), *iv,* 166
Large, Miss, *iv,* 212, 213, 214
La Sale, *i,* 309
"Last Sinner, The," *i,* 246
"Latter-Day Arabian Nights," *i,* 279; *see also* "New Arabian Nights"
Laulii, *iv,* 16
Laupepa, *see* Malietoa
Lautreppe, Albert de, *iv,* 267
"Lawrence, Lord, Life of," *iii,* 54
Lawson, *ii,* 56, 218
"Lay Morals," *i,* 123, 280; *ii,* 158
"Leading Light, The," projected story, *ii,* 54
Leaves of Grass (Whitman), *i,* 105
Ledger, The, iii, 139, 160
Le Gallienne, Richard, letter to, *iv,* 247
Leigh, Captain, *iv,* 89, 90, 91, 93, 95, 96, 97
Lemon, Mr., *ii,* 260, 274
Leonard, Paul, *iii,* 141
Lepers at Molokai, *iii,* 125 *et seq.*
"Lesson of the Master, The" (James), *iv,* 140
"Letters of Robert Louis Stevenson" (Scribner edition 1911), *i,* 217; *iii,* 250, 257, 266
"Letters to His Family and Friends," *i,* 4
"Lewison, Robin," letter written in character of, *iii,* 184
"Library, The" (Lang), *ii,* 32
Lieder (Heine), *ii,* 121 n.
Lieder und Balladen von Robert Burns (trans. Silbergleit), *i,* 65
"Life and Death," *i,* 246
"Life of Colonel Hutchinson" (his wife), *i,* 56
"Life of Johnson" (Boswell), *i,* 288, 300
"Life of Robert Louis Stevenson" (Balfour), *i,* 5, 74; *ii,* 159
"Life of Sir Walter Scott" (Lockhart), *ii,* 173, 174, 184; *iii,* 264
"Life of W. Robertson, D.D." (Stewart), *i,* 171
"Life of Wellington," projected, *ii,* 211, 239, 240, 245
"Life on the Lagoons" (Brown), *ii,* 27
"Lighthouse" (Ballantyne), *i,* 51
"Lighthouse, The," prose poem, *i,* 266
Lillie, Jean, *iv,* 284, 320
Lion of the Nile, iii, 97
Lions, *ii,* 32
Lippincott, Messrs., *ii,* 150, 151
Lippincott's Magazine, ii, 189

"Literary Recollections" (Payn), *iii,* 162
Little Land, The (*A Child's Garden*), *ii,* 201
"Little Minister, The" (Barrie), *iv,* 126, 141, 142
"Lives of the Admirals" (Southey), *i,* 104
"Lives of the Stevensons," *see* "Family of Engineers, Records of a"
Locker-Lampson, Frederick, letters to, *ii,* 318, 319, 320, 322, 328
Lockhart, *ii,* 32; *iii,* 264, 265; *iv,* 83; *see also* "Life of Sir Walter Scott"
"Lodging for the Night, A," *i,* 279, 286, 367
Logan, John, *i,* 105, 106
Logan, Mrs., *i,* 149
"Logic" (Jevons), *i,* 306
London, a review, *i,* 279, 317
"London Life, A" (James), *iii,* 62
London Voluntaries (Henley),
Longman, publisher, *ii,* 68, 126, 163, 215, 239; *iii,* 313
Longman's Magazine, ii, 67, 232, 239, 249, 290, 336, 337; *iv,* 184, 338
"Lord Beaconsfield" (Henley), *i,* 323
Loss of the Royal George, The, ii, 18
"Lost Sir Massingberd" (Payn), *ii,* 99, 284
Loti, Pierre, *iii,* 84
"Louis Quatorze et la Révocation de l'Edit de Nantes" (Michelet), *i,* 104
Love in a Valley (Meredith), *ii,* 151; *iv,* 274
Love in Idleness, iii, 18
Low, W. H., *ii,* 212, 290, 316; *iii,* 4, 20, 21, 25, 150, 172, 213; dedication of "The Wrecker" to, *iii,* 300; letters to, *ii,* 154, 160, 172, 189, 220, 249, 261, 273, 277, 279, 284, 295, 331, 348; *iii,* 15, 121; *iv,* 262
Low, Mrs. W. H., *ii,* 212, 262, 274; *iii,* 122; *iv,* 264
Lowell, J. R., *ii,* 211
Lübeck, s.s., *iii,* 238; passage to Sydney on, 271
Ludgate Hill, s.s., passage in, *ii,* 214, 348, 349; *iii,* 5, 7, 11, 20, 166
Lully, Raymond, music of, *ii,* 298
Luther, quoted, *i,* 94
Lysaght, Sidney, *iv,* 257, 269, 272, 275, 289, 299

"M. Auguste" (Méry), *i,* 377
Maben (Secretary of State), *iv,* 171
Maben, surveyor, *iii,* 325
Macaire, play, *see Robert Macaire*
Macallum, Murray, *iii,* 141
Macaulay, Lord, *i,* 104
Macbeth, ii, 154
Macdonald, David, *i,* 42, 44, 48
Macdonald, Flora, *ii,* 16, 22
MacDonald, G., rondels of, *iii,* 18
MacDonald, George, *i,* 37
Macdonald, J. H. A., *i,* 166
Mackay, Professor Æneas, *ii,* 5, 37; letters to, *ii,* 34, 35
Mackintosh family, *i,* 244
MacMahon, President, *i,* 114, 168, 306, 310, 316
Macmillan, Alexander, *i,* 214
Macmillan's Magazine, i, 3, 86, 168, 176, 185, 190, 194, 212, 214, 384; *ii,* 59
MacMorland, Mrs., letter to, *ii,* 199
"Mademoiselle Merquem" (Sand), *i,* 124
Magazine of Art, ii, 60, 150, 153, 154, 221, 290; *iii,* 159, 160,

161, 276, 282, 286, 299, 308, 312
Magic Flute, The (Mozart), *ii,* 309
Malade Imaginaire, Le (Molière), *ii,* 228
Malietoa Laupepa, *iii,* 193, 194, 196, 198, 255, 290, 310, 327; *iv,* 19, 34, 38, 39, 55, 72, 73, 94
Manchester Ship Canal, Paper by Thomas Stevenson in connection with, *ii,* 241, 242
Manhattan, magazine, *ii,* 154, 189
"Manse, The," *i,* 20; *iv,* 172
Manula, Cruise on *Curaçoa,* to, *iv,* 292, 293
Marat, Charles, *ii,* 293
"Marbot, Memoirs of," *iv,* 140, 193
Marche Funebre (Chopin), *i,* 201
"Margery Bonthron," *i,* 246
"Marine Works, Treatise of," *ii,* 110
Marion, *ii,* 32
Mariposa, s.s., *iv,* 163, 229, 235
Markheim, *i,* 219
"Markheim" ("The Merry Men"), *ii,* 229, 327
Marlowe, Christopher, *i,* 51
"Marmont's Memoirs," *ii,* 240
Marot, Clément, *i,* 160, 164
Martial, *ii,* 181; *iii,* 25
Martin, A. Patchett, *i,* 333; letters to, *i,* 312, 313
Martini, music of, *ii,* 298
"Martin's Madonna," *i,* 246
"Mary Wollstonecraft" (Mrs. Pennell), *ii,* 256
Maryanne, Sister, of the leper settlement, Molokai, *iii,* 129, 133
Masson, *i,* 219
"Master of Ballantrae, The," *iii,* 4, 37, 39, 40, 44, 46, 68, 90, 93, 95, 96, 98, 104, 114, 115, 122, 125, 138, 149, 151, 158, 181, 232, 240, 278; *iv,* 30, 48, 49, 111, 240, 260, 279; dramatis personæ of, *iii,* 35, 36; "Genesis of," *iii,* 35; plot of, *iii,* 48, 49
Mataafa, *iii,* 151, 194, 196, 255, 282, 285, 287, 290, 305, 327; *iv,* 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 41, 43, 44, 54, 55, 72, 73, 90, 93, 94, 103, 149, 172, 207, 214, 216, 217, 233, 343, 346
Mattos, Mrs. Katharine de (*née* Stevenson), letters to, *i,* 294; *ii,* 260, 274
Maxims of R.L.S., *i,* 12
Maxwell, Sir Herbert, *iv,* 321, 337; letters to, *iv,* 324, 337
Mazeppa (Byron), *i,* 193
M'Carthy, Justin, *ii,* 280
McClure, S. S., publisher, *iii,* 4, 22, 97, 160, 309; *iv,* 6, 86
McCrie, Thomas, *i,* 171; *ii,* 59
Meddowes (Herrick), *ii,* 18
Medea ("Ordered South"), *i,* 123
Mediterranean, the, impressions of, *i,* 157
Meiklejohn, Hugh, R.N., *iv,* 135, 335
Meiklejohn, Professor John, *i,* 382; *ii,* 41; compliments on Burns article, *i,* 360; letters to, *i,* 382; *iv,* 334
Melville, Herman, *iii,* 71, 124, 161
"Memoir of Fleeming Jenkin," *see also* Jenkin, Professor Fleeming
"Memoirs of a Cavalier" (Defoe), *ii,* 203
"Memoirs of an Islet" ("Memories and Portraits"), *i,* 50; *ii,* 43 n.
"Memoirs of Henry Shovel," *iii,* 185, 272

"Memoirs of the Chevalier Johnstone," *ii,* 122
"Memorials" (Liang), *iv,* 165
"Memorials of a Scottish Family," projected, *iii,* 49
"Memories and Portaits," *i,* 88; *ii,* 196, 327, 329, 346, 347, 349; *iii,* 27, 240, 241; *iv,* 172
"Men and Books," *i,* 123; *see also* "Familiar Studies of Men and Books"
Mentone, changes in, *i,* 118-120
Meredith, George, *i,* 278, 338, 341, 343, 384; *ii,* 36, 80, 81, 196; *iii,* 35, 48, 300; *iv,* 48, 228, 234, 235, 267, 269, 274, 275, 289; letters to, *iv,* 226, 274
Merritt, Henry, *i,* 236
"Merry Men, The," *ii,* 6, 33, 41-44, 46, 131, 190, 229, 326, 329; *iv,* 236; dedication to Lady Taylor, *ii,* 325
Méry, Joseph, novels by, *i,* 376
Michael, a barber, *i,* 363
Middleton, Miss, letter to, *iv,* 312
Millais, Sir John, *ii,* 246
  on R.L.S., *i,* 7
Milloy, Mr., *ii,* 110
Milne, Mrs., letter to, *ii,* 168
Milton, *iv,* 47; works of, *ii,* 15, 235; Sonnet XI quoted, *iii,* 327
"Mimes" (Schwob), *iv,* 293
"Misadventure in France, A," *ii,* 164, 165
"Misadventures of John Nicholson, The," *i,* 28; *ii,* 324, 327
"Miscellanies," for Edinburgh Edition, *iv,* 281, 308
"Misérables, Les" (Hugo), *i,* 191 n.
M'Laren, Duncan, *i,* 137, 138, 166
Modestine, the donkey of the "Travels with a Donkey," *i,* 329
Moë, Princess, ex-queen of Raiatea, *iii,* 84-86, 89, 90
Mokolii, s.s., *iii,* 133, 134
Molière, Jacques, *i,* 104; *ii,* 196, 228
"Moll Flanders" (Defoe), *ii,* 203
Molokai, leper settlement at, *iii,* 68, 125 *et seq.*
Monkhouse, Cosmo, letters to, *ii,* 185, 194
Monody on Napoleon, *ii,* 70, 71
Monroe, Miss, letters to, *ii,* 303, 304; *iii,* 31
Montaigne, essays of, *ii,* 235, 251; *iii,* 302, 303, 319
Monterey, *i,* 355, 359
Monterey Californian, i, 360, 364
"Moonstone, The" (Wilkie Collins), *i,* 41
Moors, H. J., *iii,* 68, 151, 152, 197, 216, 217, 219, 229, 285, 296; *iv,* 60
Moral Emblems, ii, 70, 74; *iii,* 278
"Morality of the Profession of Letters, The," *ii,* 5
"More New Arabian Nights: The Dynamiter" (with Mrs. R.L.S.), *ii,* 210, 212, 220, 231, 245, 246, 249
Morison, Cotter, his "Service of Man," *ii,* 332, 333
Morley, Charles, *ii,* 230
Morley, John (Viscount Morley), *i,* 104, 187, 189, 190, 193, 297, 298, 343, 387; *ii,* 45
Morning Star, missionary ship, *iii,* 112-116, 119, 137, 165
Morris, William, *i,* 121; *iv,* 21; letter to, *iv,* 21
Morrison, *i,* 30, 31
Morse, Captain, *iv,* 84, 85, 110,

Morse, Miss, *iv,* 114, 115, 122, 129, 130; letter to, *iv,* 114
"Moses, History of" ("Juvenilia"), *iv,* 241
Mowbray, Mr., *i,* 165
Mozart, symphony by, *i,* 217
Mr. Wickes (Herrick), *ii,* 18
Mulvaney ("Soldiers Three"),
"Murder of Red Colin, The," projected, *ii,* 57
Murders, projected collaboration with Gosse of series of papers on, *i,* 333, 335; *ii,* 65, 77
Murphy, Tommy, a lost child, *i,* 229, 230
Murray, Grahame, *i,* 128
Murray, W. C., *iii,* 257
Musset, Alfred de, *i,* 321; *ii,* 262, 263
My Boy Tammie, air, *i,* 165
Myers, F. W. H., letter to, *ii,* 294
"Myths" (Lang), *ii,* 235

Napier, *ii,* 240
Nares, Captain ("The Wreckers"), *iii,* 298, 304; *iv,* 321, 322
Nares, R. N., *iv,* 135
Navigator's Islands, *i,* 269, 304; *iii,* 187, 188
Nelitchka, *i,* 139, 140, 144, 151-154, 159, 163-167, 188
Nerli, Count, *iv,* 90
Neruda, Mme. Norman, *i,* 244, 294
"New Arabian Nights," *i,* 279, 329, 332, 333; *ii,* 83, 98, 135, 163, 167; *iii,* 26
New Poems (Gosse), *i,* 364
New Quarterly, i, 356, 357
"Nigel" (Scott), *ii,* 190
Nile Campaigns, 1884, *ii,* 180, 181
Niles, Mr., letter to, *ii,* 240
Noel-Pardon, M., *iii,* 176
Noll and Nell (Martin), *i,* 314
Norma, opera of, *i,* 371
"Northern Lights," *iii,* 284; *iv,* 187, 194; *see also* "Family of Engineers"
"Notes on the Movements of Young Children," *i,* 194, 202, 206
"Notre Dame" (Hugo), *i,* 190 n., 191 n.; *iv,* 288
Nous n'iron plus aux bois, rondel, *i,* 281, 282, 284
"Nursery Verses" ("A Child's Garden"), *ii,* 114-117

Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington (Tennyson), *ii,* 16-18
Ode to the Cuckoo, i, 105, 106
Œdipus, King (Sophocles), *ii,* 219
Ogilvy, Gavin, Barrie character, *iv,* 143
"Olalla," *ii,* 211, 326, 327
"Old English History" (Freeman), *iii,* 306
"Old Gardener, The," *iv,* 288
Old Man Virulent, Stevenson's name for himself, *iii,* 71
"Old Mortality" ("Memories and Portraits"), *ii,* 95, 143, 165, 196
"Old Mortality" (Scott), *i,* 191 n.
"Old Pacific Capital, The" (*Fraser's Magazine*), *iii,* 286
Oliphant, Mrs., *iii,* 151, 162
Omond, G. W. T., *ii,* 285, 286
"Omoo" (Melville), *iii,* 124
On a Grecian Urn (Keats), *ii,* 18
On Some Ghostly Companions at a Spa, ii, 9
"On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places," *i,* 37, 214
On Time (Milton), *ii,* 18

Only Child, An, projected title for cycle in *A Child's Garden, ii,* 201
"Operations of War" (Hamley), *i,* 10; *ii,* 10
"Ordered South," essay, *i,* 86, 112, 121, 123 n., 156, 168, 175, 185, 186, 384
Ori a Ori, sub-chief Tahiti (also called Rui), *iii,* 67, 79, 83, 86-91, 93, 111, 124; letter to R.L.S. from, *iii,* 108
"Origines" (Renan), *iv,* 175, 191
Orr, Fred, letter to, *iii,* 316
Orsino (*Twelfth Night*), Stevenson as, *i,* 257, 258
Osbourne, Mrs., *i,* 301, 325, 347, 379, 393; *ii,* 165; *see also* Stevenson, Mrs. R. L.
Osbourne, Lloyd, *i,* 3, 393; *ii,* 4, 6, 7, 24, 51, 52, 57-60, 63-65, 70, 74-76, 79, 83, 106, 124, 131, 136, 173, 174, 214, 245, 285, 286, 307, 310, 311, 314, 327, 341, 348; *iii,* 8, 9, 12, 16, 17, 19, 20, 27-29, 32, 36, 45, 55, 56, 58, 67, 85, 87, 91, 99, 102, 106, 107, 112, 116, 123, 134, 135, 141, 142, 147, 151, 152, 155, 160, 168, 175, 178, 182, 184, 185, 191, 209, 238, 255, 256, 263, 266, 267, 275, 281, 282, 285, 287, 288, 295, 301, 302, 303, 316, 320, 327, 331; *iv,* 10, 11, 51, 52, 64, 65, 70, 86, 89, 91, 93, 95, 97, 99, 100, 110, 113, 120, 123, 138, 145, 154, 158, 168, 169, 174, 175, 178, 182, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 212, 217, 221, 230, 231, 237, 238, 254, 273, 287, 300, 305, 316, 321, 322, 330, 331; account by, of death and burial of R. L.S., *iv,* 341 *et seq.;* collaboration with, *iii,* 4, 19, 26, 53, 54, 104, 139, 148; dedication of "Treasure Island" to, *ii,* 80
Ossianic Controversy, The, *ii,* 17
Otis, Captain A. H., of the *Casco, iii,* 4, 67, 115
"Otway, Essay on" (Gosse), *ii,* 142
Ouida, *i,* 299, 323; *iv,* 95, 96, 103
Our Lady of the Snows (*Underwoods*), *i,* 336
Ovid, quoted, *i,* 48
"Owl, The," projected, *iv,* 186
"Oxford Dictionary of the English Language" (Murray), *ii,* 133

P—n, John, letter to, *iv,* 241
P—n, Russell, letter to, *iv,* 242
Pacific Voyages, *see* "In the South Seas"
Page, H. A., pseudonym for Dr. A. Japp, *q.v., ii,* 46
"Painter's Camp in the Highlands, A" (Hamerton), *i,* 328
Pall Mall Gazette, i, 298, 350, 357, 370; *ii,* 5, 73, 225, 229, 234, 345; *iv,* 281
Pangloss, *i,* 47, 48
"Pan's Pipes" ("Virginibus Puerisque"), *i,* 317; *iv,* 172
"Panthéon de Poche" (Paul Véron), *i,* 321
Park, David, *ii,* 10
Parker, Lieut. and Mrs., *iii,* 217
"Parliament Close" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Parnassiens, the (Modern French School), proposed paper on, *i,* 243
Parodies, *ii,* 291
"Partial Portraits" (James), *iii,* 19

Pascal, Bourget's Essay on, *iii,* 319
"Paston Letters, The," *i,* 300
"Pastoral" (*Longman's*), *ii,* 337; *iv,* 172
"Pastoral Drama," projected essay, *i,* 234
Patmore, Coventry, *i,* 236
Patterson, Mrs. Betty, *ii,* 60
Paul, Kegan, *i,* 317, 320, 338, 356
"Pavilion on the Links, The," *i,* 348, 357, 368, 375, 376, 378, 381, 386
Payn, James, *i,* 357, 376; *ii,* 98, 99, 101; *iii,* 162, 163; *iv,* 29, 310, 311, 312; handwriting of, *iv,* 248; letters to, *ii,* 283; *iii,* 131, 162; *iv,* 309, 330
Payne, John, *iv,* 311
"Pearl Fisher, The" (with Lloyd Osbourne), called later "The Ebb-Tide," *q.v.*, *iii,* 139, 160, 181, 185, 309; *iv,* 31, 160, 162
"Peel's Memoirs," *ii,* 240
Pella, *i,* 139, 140, 148, 166, 167, 171; letter from, *i,* 188
Pembroke, Earl of, *iv,* 161
"Penn" (Dixon), *i,* 391, 396
Penn, William, *ii,* 28; projected essay on, *i,* 384, 391
Pennell, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph, letter to, *ii,* 255
"Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured, A," *ii,* 192
Penny Whistles, The, suggested title for *A Child's Garden, q.v., ii,* 95, 116, 117, 128, 150-152, 168
Pentland Hills, the, Stevenson's home in, i, 24, 271
"Pentland Hills" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
"Pentland Rising, The," *iv,* 281
Pepys, Samuel, *ii,* 59, 84, 125, 187, 236, 293; essay on, *ii,* 5
"Petit Jehan de Saintré" (La Sale), projected essay on, *i,* 309
"Petits Poëmes en Prose," *i,* 290, 291; *see also* Prose Poems
"Petronius Arbiter," *ii,* 182
Pew, Mr. (*Admiral Guinea*), *ii,* 224, 253
Peyrat, Napoleon, *ii,* 31
Pharos, steam yacht, *iii,* 286
Phidias, *i,* 226; *ii,* 161
"Philosophy of Umbrellas, The" (with J. W. Ferrier), *iv,* 282
"Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh," *i,* 279, 327, 328
"Pilgrim's Progress, The," *i,* 300; essay on cuts in Bagster's edition of, *ii,* 60, 61
Pilsach, Baron Senfft von, President of the Council, Samoa, *iii,* 194, 284, 289; *iv,* 141, 149, 155, 246, 260, 308; letter to, *iv,* 144
Pinkerton ("The Wrecker"), *iii,* 148, 330; *iv,* 5, 262, 322
"Pioneering in New Guinea" (Chalmers), *iii,* 227
"Pirate, The" (Marryat), *ii,* 55
"Pirate, The" (Scott), *ii,* 43
Pirate Story, A (*A Child's Garden*), *ii,* 168
Pitcairn, *iv,* 165; "Criminal Trials," *iv,* 139
Poe, Edgar Allan, *i,* 233; *ii,* 182; works of, edited by J. H. Ingram, review of, *i,* 234, 242; *To my Mother,* quoted, *i,* 250
Poè, *iv,* 315, 316, 317, 326, 346
Poepoe, Joseph, studies with, *iii,* 106
Pollington, Lord, *iii,* 30
Polynesians, the, *iii,* 121, 122, 124
"Poor Thing, The," *i,* 204

Pope, Alexander, *ii,* 18, 79; *iv,* 332
Portfolio, The, contributions to, *i,* 3, 86, 90, 111, 113, 169, 179, 202, 203, 204 n., 209, 214, 215, 235, 241, 243, 244, 263, 279, 315, 327; *iv,* 281
Porthos ("Vicomte de Bragelonne," Dumas), *iii,* 181
"Portrait of a Lady" (James), *iii,* 33
Positivism, studies in, *i,* 226
Pratt, *iii,* 238
Priest's Drought, The, iii, 97
"Prince of Grünewald," *i,* 386; *see also* "Prince Otto"
"Prince Otto" (first called "The Forest State," *q.v.*), *i,* 348, 384, 396; *ii,* 95, 120, 127, 129-131, 151, 163, 165, 172, 181, 210, 241, 245, 249, 261, 290, 305, 334; *iii,* 241; *iv,* 260; dedication of, to Mrs. N. V. de G. Sanchez, *ii,* 80; reviews and criticisms of, *ii,* 262, 263, 280, 303
Princes Street, Edinburgh, *i,* 106, 108
"Princess Casamassima" (James) *ii,* 267; *iii,* 32
"Printemps, Le," group by Rodin, *ii,* 322, 323
Proctor, Mrs. B. W., *iii,* 217
"Professor Rensselaer," *i,* 368
Prometheus (Byron), *ii,* 18
Proof-reader of "Black Arrow" for *Young Folks,* letter to R.L.S. from, *ii,* 197; letter to, *ii,* 197
Prose poems, *i,* 266, 268, 290, 291; *see also* "Petits Poëmes en Prose"
"Providence and the Guitar," *i,* 279, 332, 367, 387
Prudhomme, Sully, works of, *i,* 239, 243
"Pulvis et Umbra," *iii,* 4, 23, 34, 44, 54, 286; *iv,* 173
Punch, parodies in, *ii,* 291
"Pupil, The" (James), *iii,* 320
Purcell, Rev., *ii,* 58, 266
Pye, Mr., *iii,* 218
Pyle, Howard, *iv,* 23

"Quatre-vingt-treize" (Hugo), *i,* 199 n., 191 n
"Quentin Durward" (Scott), *i,* 191 n.; *ii,* 190
"Quiet Corner of England, A" (Champneys), *i,* 236, 237
"Quiet waters by, The," *i,* 266

"R. L. Stevenson in Wick" (Margaret H. Robertson). *i,* 38 i.
Racine, John, work of, *i,* 322
Raeburn Gallery, essay on, *i,* 297, 298
Rahéro, see Song of Rahéro
"Raleigh" (Gosse), *iii,* 49
Rameau, music of, *ii,* 298, 341
Ramsay, Allan, poems of, *i,* 288; *iv,* 166
"Ramsay, Fergusson, and Burns, An Essay," projected, *i,* 287
Randal ("The Ebb-Tide"), *iv,* 46
"Random Memories: the Coast of Fife," *i,* 29, 37; *iii,* 4, 170, 286; *iv,* 172
Raskolnikoff ("Le Crime et le Châtiment"), *ii,* 292, 293
Rawlinson, May, letters to, *ii,* 345; *iii,* 262
Rawlinson, Mrs., *ii,* 345
Reade, Charles, *i,* 191 n., 368, 383; *iii,* 41
"Real Thing, The," *iv,* 194
Realism, *ii,* 156-158
"Realism, Note on," *ii,* 156, 158, 290
"Refugees, The" (Doyle), *iv,* 223
Reid, Captain Denis, *iii,* 141
Reid, Mayne, *iii,* 201

"Reign of Law, The" (Duke of Argyll), *i,* 102
"Rembrandt" (Colvin), article in *Edinburgh Review, i,* 342
"Reminiscences" (Carlyle), *ii,* 25, 26
Rémy, Père, *iv,* 210
Renan, Ernest, works of, *iv,* 175, 190
Rennie, John, *ii,* 226
Requiem, i, 387, 388
Rhind Lectures of Sir Herbert Maxwell, *iv,* 324
Rhone, the, article on, *ii,* 199; proposed excursion down, *ii,* 295, 296
Rich, Mr., *iii,* 140
Richard III (Shakespeare), *iii,* 181, 239
Richardson, Samuel, *i,* 190 n; *iv,* 263
Richmond, s.s., *iii,* 113, 119
Richmond, Sir W. B., *ii,* 211; portrait of R. L. S. by, *ii,* 316
"Rideau Cramoisi, Le" (d'Auréville), *iv,* 185, 264
Ringarooma, ship, *iv,* 134, 135
Rintoul, Lord ("The Little Minister"), *iv,* 125
"Rising Sun, The," *iii,* 185
"Ritter von dem heiligen Geist" (Heine), *i,* 125
Road of Gratitude, *or,* Road of Loving Hearts, *iv,* 258, 325, 343; address on opening, *iv,* 346, 347
"Roads," essay on, *i,* 86, 90, 91, 92, 96, 97, 101, 111, 150, 169, 173, 175, 176, 204, 206; *iv,* 281, 282
Rob Roy, *ii,* 16, 22; *iv,* 20
"Rob Roy" (Scott), *ii,* 190
Robert Macaire, play (with Henley), *ii,* 253
Robert, Louis, *ii,* 124
Robertson, General, *ii,* 10
Robertson, Margaret H., *i,* 38 n.
Robertson, W., D.D., *i,* 171
Robertson's "Sermons," *iii,* 38
"Robin Run-the-Hedge," *iii,* 185
Robinet, painter, *i,* 139, 140, 153, 154, 160, 166, 167
"Robinson Crusoe" (Defoe), *ii,* 203, 205
Rocambole ("Ponson du Terrail"), *i,* 373
Roch, Valentine, *ii,* 214; *iii,* 8, 16, 18, 20, 29, 37, 45, 56, 67, 85
"Roderick Hudson" (James), *iii,* 32-34
Rodin, Auguste, *ii,* 212, 316; *iv,* 227; letters to, *ii,* 322, 330
Rodriguez, Albano, *i,* 363
"Rois en Exil, Les" (Daudet), *ii,* 73
"Romance" (*Longman's*), *ii,* 290
Romanes, Mrs., *i,* 127, 149
Romney Marsh, i, 236, 237
Rosa quo Locorum, iii, 221
Rosen, Countess of ("Treasure of Franchard"), *iii,* 180
Ross, Rev. Alexander and Mrs., *i,* 53-55
Ross, Dr. Fairfax, *iv,* 231, 232, 233
Rothschild, Baron, *i,* 291
Routledge, publisher, *ii,* 52, 54, 68
Rover, The (Gosse), *ii,* 122
Rowfant Rhymes (Locker-Lampson), *ii,* 319
Rowlandson, *iv,* 156
Royal Society of Edinburgh, The, *ii,* 223, 236 n., 241
Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam (illustrated by Elihu Vedder), *ii,* 222
Rubens, a drawing by, *i,* 57
Ruedi, Dr., *ii,* 21

Rupel, Adam, *i*, 35
Ruskin, John, *i*, 169; *iv*, 281
Russel family, the, *i*, 43, 44, 47
Russel, Mrs., *i*, 44, 47
Russel, Sara, *i*, 35, 43, 44, 47
Russo-Turkish War, 1877, *i*, 305
Rutherford, *i*, 37
Ruysdael, painting by, *i*, 261

St. Augustine, *i*, 10; Confessions of, *ii*, 181, 182
St. Gaudens, Augustus, *iii*, 3, 4, 8, 20, 25, 173, 213; letters to, iv, 180, 224, 294; medallion portrait by, *ii*, 277; *iii*, 8, 20
St. Gaudens, Homer, letter to, *iii*, 61
"St. Ives," *iv*, 150, 154, 155, 156, 230, 231, 254, 258, 271, 276, 287, 289, 298, 314, 327, 334
Saintsbury, Professor George, *ii*, 31, 71; letter to, *ii*, 32
"Salt Water Financier, The," *i*, 323
Salvini, article on, *ii*, 170, 171
Samoa, *i*, 268; *iii*, 68, 136, 150; History of, *see* "Footnote to History"
Samoa Times, *iii*, 174
"Samuel Pepys," essay, *see* Pepys, Samuel
"San Francisco," *ii*, 69
Sanchez, Adolpho, *i*, 359
Sanchez, Mrs. Nellie V. de G., *ii*, 60, 80; *iv*, 118
Sand, George, *i*, 124, 125, 197 n., 285
Sannazzaro ("When the Devil was Well"), *i*, 242
Saône, the, *ii*, 295
Saranac Lake, at, *iii*, 3, 4, 10 *et seq.*
Sargent, John S., *ii*, 210, 236; picture by, *ii*, 274; portraits by, *ii*, 222, 262
Saturday Review, *i*, 90, 104, 111; *ii*, 262, 263, 280; *iv*, 189
Savile Club, *i*, 183, 187, 194, 218, 219, 280, 352, 382; *ii*, 25, 185, 298; *iv*, 339
Schmidt, Emil, President of the Council, Samoa, *iv*, 300
"Schooner *Farallone*, The," *iv*, 160, 162, 173, 174, *see also* "The Ebb-Tide"
Schopenhauer, studies on, *i*, 226
Schwob, Marcel, letters to, *iii*, 103, 180, 239; *iv*, 293
Schumann, *ii*, 337
Science, opinions of R.L.S. on, *ii*, 334, 335
"Scotch Church and Union" (Defoe), *ii*, 203
Scots Observer, *iii*, 120
Scots wha hae, air, *i*, 165
"Scots Worthies, without Notes," *i*, 326
Scott, Dr., *ii*, 342, 347; *iii*, 119, 163; *iv*, 254; letter to, *iii*, 155
"Scott" (Lockhart), *ii*, 173-175, 184
Scott, Sir Walter, *i*, 11, 100, 163, 190 n., 191 n., 208, 368, 383; *ii*, 22, 174, 184, 190, 191, 217, 286; *iii*, 41, 212, 258, 276, 306; *iv*, 12, 23, 25, 26, 221, 280, 332; portrait of, *iii*, 299; projected article on, *ii*, 59; *iv*, 5
Scribner, Charles, *iii*, 3, 18, 23, 97, 172, 213; *iv*, 264, 276; letter to, *iii*, 22
Scribner's Magazine, *iii*, 3, 4, 9, 10, 12, 17, 18, 22, 34, 35, 37, 47, 60, 98, 148, 304
Scribner's Sons, Charles, *ii*, 215, 249, 274, 335, 348; *iii*, 17, 51, 53, 59, 106

"Sea Cook, The," *ii,* 51-55; *see* "Treasure Island"
Seed, Hon. J., of New Zealand, *i,* 268, 304, *iii,* 187
Seeley, Professor, *ii,* 151, 153
Seeley, Richmond (*The Portfolio*), *i,* 3, 204 n., 205, 206, 245; *iv,* 282
Sellar, Mrs., *i,* 167
Sellar's Trial, *ii,* 177
Selth, Charlie, *iii,* 141
"Sensations d'Italie" (Bourget), *iii,* 316, 320
"September" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Seraphina ("Prince Otto"), *ii,* 262, 263, 303, 306
"Sermon by Your Leave, A," *i,* 266
"Service of Man" (Cotter Morison), *ii,* 332, 333
Seumanutafa, Chief of Apia, *iii,* 214, 295; *iv,* 237, 326
"Seventeenth Century Studies" (Gosse), *ii,* 142
Sewall, American Consul, Samoa, *iii,* 191, 217, 253, 254
"Shadow on the Bed, The" (Mrs. R.L.S.), *ii,* 33, 41, 46
Shairp, Professor, *i,* 286, 382
Shakespeare, William, *i,* 51, 383; *ii,* 70, 71, 152, 157, 161, 196, 235, 270-272, 346, *iii,* 180, 181, 221, 240; *iv,* 48, 107
Shannon, Will J., *ii,* 58
Shaw, G. Bernard, *iii,* 40-42
"Shelley" (Dowden), *ii,* 324, 325
Shelley, Lady, *ii,* 210, 256, 284, 325; *iii,* 319
Shelley, Percy Bysshe, *ii,* 284, 285, 326
Shelley, Sir Percy, *ii,* 210, 284, 285, 325; *iii,* 59
"Sherlock Holmes, Adventures of" (Doyle), *iv,* 170
Shorter Catechism, The, *i,* 299; *ii,* 176, 184; *iii,* 51
"Shovel," *iii,* 244; *iv,* 30
"Shovels of Newton French, The," *iii,* 192, 244, 272; *iv,* 31
"Sign of the Ship," causerie (Lang), *iii,* 47, 170
"Sigurd" (Morris), *ii,* 61; *iv,* 21
Silver, John ("Treasure Island"), *ii,* 127, 217, 228
"Silverado Squatters, The," *i,* 349; *ii,* 3, 6, 75, 79, 82, 95, 122, 126, 129, 130, 151, 153, 163, 172, 192, 240, 241; *iv,* 308
Simele, *see* Henry
Simoneau, Jules, *i,* 358, 359, 363; letters to, *ii,* 132, 138
Simoneau, Mrs. Jules, *ii,* 139
Simpson, Sir Walter, *i,* 65, 70, 71, 74, 77, 103, 128, 184, 201, 227, 255, 277, 283, 300; *ii,* 4, 25, 67, 82, 144, 312; dedication to, *ii,* 80; letters to, *ii,* 218, 347; *iii,* 12
Simson, Dr., *ii,* 191
Sinclair, Amy, *i,* 52-55
Sinico, singer, *i,* 241
"Sire (or Sieur) de Malétroit's Door, The" (sometimes called "The Sire de Malétroit's Mousetrap"), *i,* 279, 308, 309, 315, 367
Sitwell, Mrs. (afterwards Lady Colvin), *i,* 5, 85, 87, 149, 176, 225, 301; *ii,* 25, 26, 165; *iii,* 111, 275; letters to, *i,* 88 90, 93, 95, 97, 101, 103, 105, 108, 112, 113, 115, 120, 121, 123, 130, 132, 142, 144, 150, 151, 155, 157, 162, 167, 169, 175, 177, 185, 186, 188, 192, 195, 199, 201, 202, 203, 207, 210, 212, 214, 216, 218, 219, 221, 222, 223, 225, 228, 232, 233, 235, 236, 239, 241, 244, 247, 248, 250,

251, 252, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 262, 264, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 281, 283, 284, 292, 293, 295, 297, 298, 299, 304, 308, 317, 321, 324, 325; *ii,* 48, 66, 120, 166; *iv,* 277; letter from Mrs. R. L. Stevenson to, *iii,* 107
Skeggs, Carolina ("Vicar of Wakefield"), *iii,* 202
Skelt, *ii,* 153, 162, 192, 193
Skelton, Miss, *iv,* 192
Skerryvore, *ii,* 209, 248; *iii,* 21, 184, 226, 263; *iv,* 44
Skinner, Mr., *iv,* 297
"Slate, The," *i,* 386
"Sleeper Awakened, The," *iv,* 186
Smeoroch, a Syke terrier, *ii,* 176; *iv,* 313
Smiles, Samuel, *ii,* 226
Smith, Adam, *i,* 106
Smith, Captain, *i,* 354
"Smith, Mr. Pirbright," *ii,* 88, 89
Smith, Rev. George, of Galston, *i,* 20; *iii,* 34
"Soldiers Three" (Kipling),
Solna, Count Festetics de, *iv,* 299
"Solomon Crabb" (Fielding), *ii,* 70-72
"Solution, The" ("The Lesson of the Master") (James), *iii,* 163
Song at the Feast of Brougham Castle (Wordsworth), quoted, *ii,* 40
Song of Deborah and Barak, i, 221
Song of Rahéro, iii, 93, 97, 106, 246
Song of To-morrow, The, i, 204
Songs of Scotland, without words, for the Pianoforte (Surenne), *i,* 165
Songs of Travel, ii, 300; *iii,* 9, 79, 121, 143
Sonnet to England (Martin), *i,* 314
"Sophia Scarlet," unfinished noval, *iv,* 13, 31, 46, 150; plan of, *iv,* 3, 11
Sophocles, *ii,* 162; Campbell's translation of works of, *ii,* 219
Soulary, works of, *i,* 239, 243
South Sea Ballads, iii, 74, 97, 161
"South Sea Idyls" (Stoddard), *ii,* 289
"South Sea Letters," published first as "The South Seas," later as "In the South Seas," *q.v., iii,* 67, 97, 150, 292; projected plan of, *iii,* 142-146
"South Sea Yarns" (with Lloyd Osbourne), projected, *iii,* 148, 160; *iv,* 281
Southey, Robert, *i,* 49; *ii,* 26
Spain, *i,* 173
Spectator, The, i, 343, 358, 383; *ii,* 8; *iii,* 246
Spectator, The (Addison's), *i,* 371
Speculative Society of Edinburgh University, *i,* 60, 61, 279; *ii,* 37, 38, 144, 146, 285
Spender, Alfred, *iii,* 263
Sperber, German war-ship, *iii,* 217
"Spring," prose poem, *i,* 286, 288, 290, 292, 297
Spring Sorrow (Henley), *i,* 281
"Squaw Men, The," projected story, *ii,* 54
Stansfield, *iv,* 135
State Trials, *iv,* 30
"Stepfather's Story, The," projected, *i,* 308, 309
Stephen, Sir Leslie (*Cornhill Magazine*), *i,* 3, 86, 189,

194, 249, 255, 279, 292, 296-298, 301, 304, 308, 309, 360, 375, 376, 381, 383; *ii,* 27, 36, 41, 46, 144; letter from, on Victor Hugo's romances, *i,* 189-191 n.
Stevenson, Alan, *iii,* 292; *iv,* 157, 166, 167, 168, 187, 218, 284, 285, 321
Stevenson, David A., C.E., *ii,* 184, letters to, *ii,* 176, 287
Stevenson, Hugh, *iv,* 217, 218
Stevenson, J. Horne, *iv,* 319
letter to, *iv,* 240
Stevenson, James, *iv,* 218, 228, 283, 284
Stevenson, James S., letters to, *iv,* 217, 225
Stevenson, John, *iv,* 240
Stevenson, Macgregor, *iv,* 184
Stevenson, Mrs. R.L., *i,* 301, 325, 347, 379, 393; *ii,* 3, 4, 6, 24, 25-27, 30, 31, 33, 46, 48, 58, 64, 68, 75, 79, 93, 94, 101-103, 105, 113, 117, 121, 123, 129, 130, 136, 142, 158, 162, 165, 174, 188, 200, 213, 214, 223, 225, 227, 231, 235, 245, 258, 265, 289, 298, 300-302, 314, 327, 328, 330, 336, 339, 344, 348; *iii,* 4, 6, 8, 9, 15-18, 20, 25, 28, 29, 31-33, 36, 44, 45, 52, 53, 55, 69, 99, 101, 102, 106, 112, 116, 135, 138, 139, 141, 142, 151, 154, 159, 162, 164, 168, 172, 173, 186, 203, 204, 205, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 221, 226, 228, 238, 248, 255, 266, 267, 271, 273, 275, 281, 282, 283, 285, 292, 294, 295, 311, 316, 327; *iv,* 11, 16, 41, 48, 49, 64, 70, 71, 81, 84, 89, 96, 97, 99, 101, 109, 110, 113, 115, 116, 117, 119, 120, 121, 149, 154, 155, 161, 162, 163, 164, 168, 169, 174, 175, 176, 182, 192, 193, 210, 219, 221, 228, 231, 232, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 254, 271, 273, 278, 287, 290, 297, 331, 334; ashes of, interred, *iii,* 196; on Mount Vaea; character of, *ii,* 3; first meeting with, *i,* 301, 347; *iii,* 60; illness of, *ii,* 61, 63, 66, 75, 78, 79, 82, 83; letters from, *ii,* 105; *iii,* 84; 107, 123; letters to, *ii,* 97, 99, 312, 341, 342; *iii,* 55, 57, 60, 125; *iv,* 192; portrait of, *ii,* 262
Stevenson, Mrs. Thomas (*née* Balfour), *i,* 20, 99, 211, 257; *ii,* 97, 214, 253, 289, 330, 336, 341, 348; *iii,* 10, 15-18, 20, 28, 29, 32, 36, 50, 52, 56, 85, 87, 90, 99, 106, 107, 112, 116, 147; *iv,* 52, 53, 60, 120, 186, 188, 242, 285, 287, 300; letters to, *i,* 21, 22, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 38, 40, 41, 43, 46, 50, 62, 64, 66, 71, 88, 118, 127, 131, 134, 135, 137, 138, 141, 149, 159, 163, 164, 165, 168, 171, 172, 174, 176, 194, 219, 282, 302, 303, 320, 325, 326, 327, 330, 331, 338, 339, 340; *ii,* 23, 64, 81, 102, 103, 108, 117, 163, 173, 175, 235, 301, 313, 316; *iii,* 133, 140, 164, 166; and Mrs. Stevenson, letters to, jointly, *i,* 35, 311, 322; *ii,* 9, 10, 20, 29, 123, 124, 174, 177, 202, 215, 234, 259, 276, 299, 310, 313
Stevenson, Robert, *i,* 19; *ii,* 137, 226; *iv,* 217, 283, 284, 285, 321, 323
Stevenson, Robert (the first), *iv,* 218
Stevenson, Robert Alan Mowbray (Bob), *i,* 89, 93, 94, 104, 105, 151, 157, 161, 177, 184, 195-197, 199, 200, 202, 212, 224, 250, 254, 257, 266,

277, 282, 294, 295, 301, 304, 358, 376; *ii,* 34, 67, 82, 93, 144, 167, 228, 229, 260, 274; *iii,* 104; letters to, *ii,* 83, 100, 156, 308, 310; *iii,* 10, 99; *iv,* 282, 318
Stevenson, Robert Louis Balfour (R.L.S.), epistolary style of, *i,* 7; character of, *i,* 8 *et seq.;* his conversation, *i,* 13; personal appearance, *i,* 14; parents of, *i,* 19, 20; birth of, *i,* 20; education, *i,* 21 *et seq.;* admitted to the Edinburgh Bar, *i,* 277; appreciation of, by Lysaght, *iv,* 299; interest in music, *ii,* 298, 299, 308-311, 342; portraits, medallions, photographs, and busts of, *ii,* 222, 262, 277, 310, 311, 314; *iii,* 8, 25; religious views, *i,* 27, 318-320; *ii,* 23, 24; Balfour's Life of, *see* Balfour
Stevenson, Thomas, *i,* 19-21, 27, 97, 101-103, 183, 211, 215, 238-240, 248, 267, 304, 307, 317, 318, 379; *ii,* 3, 53, 108, 171, 209, 210, 253, 288, 289, 296, 298, 300, 302, 306, 314, 329, 330; *iv,* 187, 218, 285; and Sir James Depar, *i,* 380 n.; death of, *i,* 21; *ii,* 214, 345, 346; dedication to, *ii,* 80; illness of, *i,* 239, 240, 248, 296; *ii,* 155, 213, 297, 336, 341; memories of, *iii,* 46, 49; letters to, *i,* 23, 29, 34, 37, 55, 68, 70, 310, 318, 323, 339; *ii,* 16, 56, 59, 101, 110, 118, 135, 158, 173, 190, 223, 224, 241, 266, 286, 301, 314; and Mrs. Stevenson, letters to, jointly, *i,* 35, 311, 322; *ii,* 9, 10, 20, 29, 123, 124, 174, 177, 202, 215, 234, 259, 276, 299, 310, 313
Stewart, Miss, of Bathgate, *i,* 343, 344
Stewart, Alan Breck, letter as from, *iii,* 235; *see also* Breck, Alan
Stewart, Dugald, 171
Stewart, James (Appin Murder), *ii,* 57; *iv,* 19, 233
"Stickit Minister, The" (Crockett), *iv,* 232
Stockton, Frank R., *ii,* 230
Stoddard, Charles Warren, *iii,* 166; *iv,* 128; letters to, *i,* 394; *ii,* 19, 289
"Stories and Interludes" (Pain), *iv,* 76
"Story of a Lie, The," *i,* 28, 347, 350, 354, 356, 367; *ii,* 190
"Strange Adventures of Mr. Nehemiah Solny," *i,* 246
"Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, The," *ii,* 211, 273, 279; *iii,* 3, 23; *iv,* 160; dedication to Katharine de Mattos, *ii,* 274, 275; criticisms of, *ii,* 291-294
Strong, Austin, *iii,* 117, 295, 302, 306, 316; *iv,* 71, 89, 91, 95, 101; letters to, *iv,* 128, 130, 157, 196, 199, 201, 204
Strong, Mrs. Isobel (Belle), *iii,* 101, 117, 295, 302, 314, 316, 328; *iv,* 28, 41, 45, 52, 53, 57, 58, 59, 66, 70, 71, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 101, 109, 110, 113, 116, 120, 154, 161, 162, 163, 164, 169, 174, 182, 192, 210, 211, 221, 231, 236, 237, 238, 239, 254, 285, 287, 290, 298, 316, 331, 332, 333, 334; letter to, *ii,* 11
Stuebel, Dr., German Consul, *iii,* 223, 229, 310, 330; *iv,* 134
Subpriorsford, name for Vailima, *iv,* 23, 29

Such is Life (Martin), *i,* 313
Sudbury, *i,* 266
"Suicide Club, The," *ii,* 83; *see* "New Arabian Nights"
Sullivan, Russell, *iii,* 213
"Summer Cruising in the South Seas" (Stoddard), *i,* 394
"Summer Night, A," *i,* 266
Sun, New York, articles in, *iii,* 142
Sutherland, Mrs., *i,* 44
Swan, Professor, *ii,* 250; *iii,* 141; *iv,* 187
Sweet Girl Graduate and Other Poems, A (Martin), *i,* 312
Swift, Dr., of leper settlement, *iii,* 128
Swinburne, Algernon C., poems of, *i,* 355; *iv,* 274
Sydney, visits to, *iii,* 69, 154, 159, 165, 167, 172, 175, 179, 184, 191, 232, 239, 242, 243, 249, 250, 265, 271; *iv,* 149, 160
Symonds, John Addington, *ii,* 5, 14, 16-18, 26-29, 36, 42, 60-62, 66, 67, 73, 75, 79, 82, 88, 94, 249; *iv,* 189, 190; dedication by, to R.L.S., *iv,* 338; epithet for R.L.S., *i,* 12; letters to, *ii,* 245, 292; *iii,* 24, 80; letter from Mrs. R.L.S. to, *ii,* 105; proposed dedication of South Sea book to, *iii,* 80

"Table Talk and Plain Speaker" (Hazlitt), *ii,* 235
Tacitus, *ii,* 182, 183; *iii,* 241
Taine, *iii,* 35, 300; *iv,* 190
Tait, *ii,* 223
"Tales for Winter Nights," projected title, *ii,* 41, 44
"Tales of a Grandfather" (Scott), *iii,* 306
"Tales of My Grandfather," *iii,* 299; *iv,* 75, 128, 140, 187, 188, 191, 194, 221, 222, 267
"Talk and Talkers," *ii,* 6, 67, 68, 244; identity of characters in, *ii,* 81
Tamate, *see* Chalmers, Rev. J.
Tarleton ("The Beach of Falesá"), *iv,* 114
Tati, Chief, *iii,* 93
Tauilo, *iv,* 53, 57, 60, 62, 63, 205
Tautira, *iii,* 78 *et seq.,* 93, 116
Taylor, Charlie (Sale), *iv,* 42, 43, 44, 52, 53, 57, 59
Taylor, Lady, *ii,* 210, 287; *iv,* 62; letters to, *ii,* 325, 326; *iii,* 59, 135, 153; *iv,* 115
Taylor, Miss, *iv,* 247
Taylor, Sir Henry, *ii,* 210, 287
Tembinoka, King of Apemama, *iii,* 136-138, 140, 149, 159, 161, 182; *iv,* 307, 346
Tempest, The (Shakespeare), *ii,* 196
Temple Bar, magazine, *i,* 279, 308, 309, 315, 368
Temps, Le, articles, in, *iv,* 187
Tennyson, Alfred, *iv,* 145, 190
"Tentation de St. Antoine" (Flaubert), *i,* 213
Teriitera, Tahitian name of R.L.S., *iii,* 86, 93, 97, 108
"Tess of the D'Urbervilles" (Hardy), *iv,* 127, 167
Thackeray, W. M., *iv,* 13
"Theatrical World" (Archer), *iv,* 268
"Thérèse Raquin," *ii,* 154
Thiers, works of, *ii,* 240
Thompson, Rev. R. Wardlaw, letter to, *iv,* 72
"Thomson," pseudonym, *ii,* 63, 64, 109, 227; *iii,* 39; letters in character of, *ii,* 110, 226; *see also* "Johnson"
Thomson, Mr., *i,* 23; *iii,* 245
Thoreau, Henry David, *i,* 384; *ii,* 265; essay on, in "Familiar Studies," *i,* 343, 348, 371, 374, 375, 381, 382, 384,

392; *ii,* 47, 48, 53; quoted, *ii,* 255
"Thoughts on Literature as an Art," *i,* 385
"Thrawn Janet," *ii,* 6, 33, 34, 41, 46, 190, 326
"Three Sea Fortalices," projected essays, *i,* 309
Threnodia Augustalis (Dryden), *ii,* 18
Ticonderoga, iii, 97
Time, magazine, *ii,* 263, 266, 268
Times, article, *iii,* 326; letters to, on Samoan affairs, *iii,* 194, 195, 288, 308; *iv,* 4, 71, 77, 100, 260, 270, 271
Timon (Shakespeare), *ii,* 270, 271
To a Solemn Music (Milton) *ii,* 18
"To the Pentland Hills" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Todd, John, *ii,* 336; *see* "Pastoral"
Tomarcher, nickname for Archer, Thomas, *q.v., iii,* 42, 77
"Torn Surplice, The," projected, *ii,* 46
Torrence, Rev., *i,* 271
"Touchstone, The," *i,* 204
Tourgenieff, *i,* 337; *iii,* 48
Trades Unions, *i,* 137
"Tragedies of the Wilderness" (Drake), *iii,* 40
"Tragic Comedians, The" (Meredith), *i,* 341
"Tragic Muse, The" (James), *iii,* 179, 232
Traquair, Willie, *i,* 42
"Travailleurs de la Mer" (Hugo), *i,* 191 n.
"Travellers' Tales," *ii,* 131
"Travelling Companion, The," projected, *ii,* 46, 164, 165, 307
"Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes," *i,* 278, 280, 326, 328, 329, 332, 336, 338, 340, 348, 367, 369, 376, 391; *ii,* 30; *iii,* 172; *iv,* 260
"Treasure Island," *i,* 10; *ii,* 6, 51-55, 57, 58, 61, 68, 79, 80, 82, 95, 123, 127, 131, 162, 164, 193, 203, 204, 217, 228, 236, 287; *iii,* 3, 8, 313; *iv,* 26, 160, 260; illustrated edition of, *ii,* 266; paper on, *iv,* 313; in "My First Book" series; *iv,* 313, 314
"Treasure of Franchard, The," *ii,* 94; *iii,* 180; *iv,* 11
Trelawney, Squire (("Treasure Island"), *ii,* 51, 52
"Trial of Joan of Arc," *i,* 300
"Trials of the Sons of Rob Roy, with Anecdotes," *ii,* 57
Tribune, The New York, ii, 101; letter to Editor of, *ii,* 98
"Tricoche et Cacolet," *i,* 332
Trinity College, *i,* 332
"Tristram Shandy" (Sterne), *i,* 174
Trollope, Anthony, work of, *i,* 322
Trophées, Les, sonnets (de Heredia), *iv,* 218
Trudeau, Dr., *iii,* 4
Tulloch, Principal, *ii,* 4, 16, 21, 41; *iii,* 286, 312
Tupper, Martin, *ii,* 76
"Tushery," *ii,* 127-129
Tusitala Edition of Stevenson, *i,* 5
Tusitala, tale teller, *iv,* 10, 56, 93, 95, 253, 275, 277, 305, 317, 325, 336, 342, 344
Tutuila, expedition to, *iii,* 191, 195, 254
Twa Dogs (Burns), *i,* 341, 342
Twain, Mark, *i,* 395; *iv,* 181

Twelfth Night (Shakespeare), *ii,* 196; performance at the Jenkins', *i,* 257
"Two Falconers of Cairnstane, The," *i,* 245, 246
"Two Nations," *iii,* 62
"Two St. Michael's Mounts, The," essay projected, *i,* 308, 309
"Two Years Before the Mast" (Dana), *iii,* 74
Tylney, Emery, *i,* 264, 265
Tyndall, J., *i,* 240
"Typee" (Melville), *iii,* 124
Uma ("The Beach of Falesá"), *iv,* 96
Umbrella, sent to Rudyard Kipling, *ii,* 32, 33
Underwoods, i, 336, 389; *ii,* 5, 20, 25, 132, 189, 277, 280 n., 300, 327, 329, 346, 349; *iii,* 9, 13, 177, 241; *iv,* 260, 282

Vacquerie, *ii,* 31
Vaea, Mount, *iii,* 197, 198, 323; *iv,* 272; burial place, *iii,* 196
Vaea, River, explorations of, *iii,* 321
Vailima, decorations for new house at, *iii,* 173; estate named, *iii,* 247, 262; new house at, *iv,* 145
Vailima Edition of Stevenson, *i,* 5
Vailima Letters, *i,* 4; *iii,* 193
Vanity Fair, magazine, *i,* 279, 293, 294, 332
"Vanity Fair" (Thackeray), *iv,* 13
Vedder, Elihu, *ii,* 222
"Velasquez" (R.A.M.Stevenson), *i,* 89
"Vendetta in the West, A," *i,* 348, 357, 358, 360, 363, 374-376, 378, 385, 386, 396
Verses:
Adela, Adela, Adela Chart, *iii,* 298
Bells upon the city are ringing in the night, *ii,* 275
Blame me not that this epistle; letter partly in verse to Charles Baxter, *i,* 75
Brave lads in olden musical centuries, *ii,* 28
Dear Henley, with a pig's snout on, *ii,* 55
Do you remember—can we e'er forget? *iii,* 157
Far have you come, my lady, from the town; rondel, *i,* 283
Figure me to yourself, I pray, *ii,* 12
He may have been this and that, *ii,* 300
Here lies a man who never did, *ii,* 186
Here's breid an' wine an' kebbuck an' canty cracks at e'en, *i,* 376
Home, no more home to me, whither must I wander? *iii,* 79
I counted miseries by the heap, *ii,* 179
I had an evil day when I to Strathpeffer drew anigh, *ii,* 9
I heard the pulse of the besieging sea, *iii,* 147
I was a barren tree before, *iv,* 249
I would shoot you, but I have no bow, *ii,* 87
My Stockton, if I failed to like, *ii,* 230
Noo lyart leaves blaw ower the green; letter in verse to Charles Baxter, *i,* 289
Nor you, O Penny Whistler, grudge, *ii,* 116

Verses—*Continued*
Not roses to the rose, I trow, *ii,* 319
O Henley, in my hours of ease, *i,* 337
O, how my spirit languishes, *iii,* 76
O Sovereign of my Cedercrantz, *iv,* 145
Of the many flowers you brought me, *ii,* 345
Of where or how, I nothing know, *i,* 351
The pleasant river gushes, *ii,* 128
There was racing and chasing in Vailele Plantation, *iv,* 306
Though oft I've been touched by the volatile dart, *iii,* 298
We'll walk the woods no more, *i,* 284
We're quarrelling, the villages, *iii,* 237
Why am I so penniless, *ii,* 130
Youth now flies on feathered foot, *ii,* 279
"Vicomte de Bragelonne" (Dumas), *iii,* 181, 240
"Victor Hugo's Romances," *i,* 86, 177, 179, 185, 187, 189-191, 197, 279
"Villa Quarters" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
"Village on the Cliff, The," *i,* 251
Villon, François; paper on, *i,* 277, 286, 287, 308, 309; *iii,* 180, 241
Viol and Flute (Gosse), *ii,* 200
Virgil, *i,* 40, 59; *iii,* 35; *iv,* 141
"Virginibus Puerisque," *i,* 279, 300, 301, 312, 317; *ii,* 5, 8, 19, 329, 346
Vitrolles, Baron de, *iv,* 183, 193
Vogelweide, Walther von der, *i,* 335
Voltaire, *ii,* 31
Vossiche Zeitung, iv, 124

Wachtmeister, Count, *iii,* 285
Wade, *ii,* 16
Wagner, Richard, music of, *i,* 256
"Waif-Woman, The," *iv,* 137
Walker, Patrick, *ii,* 191
"Walking Tours," *i,* 298, 299
Walter (Wogg *or* Woggs), a Skye terrier, *ii,* 4, 12, 21, 41, 43, 44, 58, 97, 103, 118, 119, 141, 142, 161, 162, 165, 175, 235, 238, 302, 336; *iii,* 230
Wandering Willie, air, *i,* 165
"Wandering Willie's Tale" ("Red-gauntlet"), *ii,* 12
Ward, Miss, *i,* 149
"Washington" (Irving), *iii,* 218
"Waterloo" (Hamley), *ii,* 240
Watts-Dunton, T., letter to, *ii,* 316
"Waverley" (Scott), *ii,* 190
Waverley Novels, *i,* 170; *ii,* 174, 175, 184, 190; *iv,* 4, 82, 92, 173, ordered by R.L.S., *iii,* 114
"Way of the World, The" (Trollope), *i,* 322
Weatherall's illustrations to "Island Nights' Entertainments," *iv,* 183
"Webster," *i,* 51; essay (Gosse), *ii,* 142
Weg, nickname for Edmund Gosse, *i,* 343, 344; *iv,* 338
Wegg, Silas ("Our Mutual Friend"), *i,* 343; *iii,* 211
"Weir of Hermiston" (called also "The Justice Clerk"), unfinished, *i,* 28, 271; *iv,* 3, 121, 138, 140, 150, 165,

177, 178, 179, 221, 258, 267, 287, 341
Wellington, Duke of, *ii,* 16-18, 70; *iii,* 272; projected Life of, *ii,* 211, 239, 243, 245; table talk of, quoted, *ii,* 129 n.
Wemyss, Mrs., *i,* 35, 36, 49
Went, George, *iii,* 289
"Werther" (Goethe), *i,* 92, 93, 94
West Wind, The, ii, 18
"What was on the Slate," *i,* 337
"When the Devil was Well," *i,* 242, 243
White, Gleeson, *Ballades, iii,* 18
"White Company, The" (Doyle), *iv,* 219
White-Book, German, on Samoa, *iv,* 157, 183
Whitman, Walt, essay on, *i,* 86, 105, 107, 123, 126, 150, 151, 169, 170, 201-203; *ii,* 59; poems of, *i,* 105, 256; *ii,* 15, 84, 293
Whitmee, Rev. S. J., *iv,* 39, 62, letter to, *iv,* 33
Wick, description of, *i,* 38 *et seq.*
"Wild Man of the Woods, The," *i,* 368
Williams, *ii,* 80
Williams, Dr., *ii,* 156
Williams, Mrs. Virgil, *ii,* 60
"Will o' the Mill," *i,* 279, 309, 367, 387
Wilson, Janey, *i,* 22
Wiltshire ("The Beach of Falesá"), *iii,* 291; *iv,* 45, 96, 99, 113
"Window in Thrums, A" (Barrie), *iv,* 141, 142
"Winter and New Year" ("Picturesque Notes on Edinburgh"), *i,* 328
Winter Evening, sonnet (Lampman), *iii,* 97
"Winter's Walk, A," *i,* 296, 297
Wishart, George, character of, from Tylney's Narrative in Foxe's "Book of Martyrs," *i,* 264, 265; *iv,* 174
"Witch of Prague, The" (Crawford), *iv,* 141
Wogg or Woggs, *see* Walter
Woman killed with kindness, The (Heywood), *ii,* 81
Women, Thoughts on, *i,* 225-227
Wood engraving, *ii,* 72, 74, 83
Woodman, The (in *New Review*), *iii,* 206, 207
Woodseer, Gower ("The Amazing Marriage"), *ii,* 227, 275; prototype of R.L.S., *iv,* 227, 274, 275
Wordsworth, William, *ii,* 89, 251
World's Great Age, The (*Hellas,* Shelley), *ii,* 18
"Wreck of the *Susanna,* The," *ii,* 33
"Wrecker, The" (with Lloyd Osbourne), *i,* 28, 394; *iii,* 139, 148, 159, 160, 161, 169, 178, 181, 185, 192, 199, 221, 222, 273, 276, 297, 299, 300, 301, 302, 304, 309, 311, 317, 327; *iv,* 3, 5, 11, 69, 76, 83, 86, 99, 118, 140, 240, 260, 262
"Wrong Box, The, or A Game of Bluff" (first called "The Finsbury Tontine," *q.v.*) (with Lloyd Osbourne), *iii,* 4, 19, 68, 96, 98, 104; *iii,* 151
Wurmbrand, Captain-Count, *iv,* 237, 251, 253, 267, 299
Wyatt, Mr., *i,* 21

Yeats, W.B., letter to, *iv,* 274
"Yellow Paint," *i,* 204
Yoshida-Torajiro, essay on, *i,* 348, 381, 382, 384

"Young Chevalier, The," unfinished; *iv,* 3, 46, 47, 49, 51, 76, 86, 125, 150, 177
Young Folks Magazine, ii, 53, 54, 57, 65, 127, 151, 253; letter from, *ii,* 197; letter to, *ii,* 197
Yule-Tide, iii, 246
Zassetsky, Nelitchka, *see* Nelitchka
Zassetsky, Princess, *i,* 138, 139, 143-154, 160, 162, 164, 165, 168, 169, 171, 172, 175, 176, 218
Zola, Emile, *ii,* 15, 73, 74; *iv,* 190, 194, 263

INDEX OF TITLES

[Titles of volumes or sections of a volume are in italics. Index to Poems is to be found in Volume XV; index to Letters (Vols. XXIX-XXXII) is to be found in this volume, immediately preceding this index.]

Across the Plains, *IV*, 95
Act of Squatting, The, *IV*, 226
Admiral Guinea, *IX*, 135
Adventures of Henry Shovel, *XXIV*, 195
Æs Triplex, *II*, 83
Alpine Diversions, *XXVII*, 169
Amateur Emigrant, The, *IV*, 1
Apemama, *XX*, 287
Apology for Idlers, An, *II*, 59
Appeal to the Clergy of the Church of Scotland, An, *II*, 256
Athanasius, St., *XXVII*, 346
Autumn Effect, An, *XXVII*, 103

Bagster's "Pilgrim's Progress," *V*, 295
Ballads, *XV*, 1
"Ballads and Songs of Scotland, The," *V*, 363
Beach of Falesá, The, *XXIII*, 3
Beau Austin, *IX*, 85
Beggars, *XIII*, 188
Béranger, *V*, 315
Black Arrow, The, *XVII*, 1
Body-Snatcher, The, *XIX*, 213
Bottle Imp, The, *XXIII*, 91
Book of Joseph, The, *XXVII*, 204
Books which have influenced me, *XXVII*, 66
Late Sam Bough, The, *XXVII*, 326
Building of the Bell Rock, The, *XVI*, 230
Burns, Some Aspects of Robert, *XXVII*, 343
Byways of Book Illustration, *V*, 343

Cannonmills, *XXIV*, 249
Chapter on Dreams, A, *XIII*, 161
Character, A, *XXVII*, 321
Character of Dogs, The, *XIII*, 103
Charity Bazaar, The, *XXIV*, 169
Charles of Orleans, *V*, 172
Child's Garden of Verses, A, *XIV*, 1
Child's Play, *II*, 119
Christmas Sermon, A, *XIII*, 228
Coast of Fife, The, *XIII*, 206
Cockermouth and Keswick, *XXVII*, 91
College for Men and Women, *V*, 354
College Magazine, A, *XIII*, 34

College Papers, XXVII, 233
Colvin, Editorial Note by Sir Sidney, X, 93, XXVIII, 144, 189, 209, 267, *passim, XXIX-XXXII*
Companion to the Cook Book, Adorned with a Century of Authentic Anecdotes, *XXVII,* 335
Crabbed Age and Youth, *II,* 46
Criticisms, *V,* 277

David Balfour, XXII, 1
Davos in Winter, *XXVII,* 165
Day After To-Morrow, The, *II,* 245
Deacon Brodie, *IX,* 1
Debating Societies, *XXVII,* 248
Diogenes, *XXIV,* 175
Domestic Animals, *XVI,* 174
Dynamiter, The, VIII, 1

Ebb-Tide, The, XXIV, 1
Edinburgh: Picturesque Notes, II, 265
Edinburgh Students in 1824, *XXVII,* 235
Education of an Engineer, The, *XIII,* 218
Eight Island, The, *XX,* 185
El Dorado, *II,* 93
Emigrant Train, The, *IV,* 111
English Admirals, The, *II,* 97
Episodes in the Story of a Mine, *IV,* 263
Essays on Literature, XXVII, 1
Essays on Nature, XXVII, 91
Ethical Papers, II, 149
Ethics of Crime, The, *II,* 209

Fables, X, 95
Familiar Studies of Men and Books, V, 1
Father Damien, *XXVI,* 29
Fellow Passengers, *IV,* 130
Fielding and Richardson, *XXVII,* 339
Fontainebleau, *XIII,* 247
Footnote to History, A, *XXVI,* 139
Foreigner at Home, The, *XIII,* 5
Forest Notes, *XXVII,* 134
French Legend, A, *II,* 243
From the Clyde to Sandy Hook, *IV,* 3

Gentlemen, II, 229
Gilberts, The, *XX,* 221
Glossary to Weir of Hermiston, *XXVIII,* 158
Gossip on a Novel of Dumas's, A, *XIII,* 122
Gossip on Romance, A, *XIII,* 132
Great North Road, The, *XXVIII,* 213

Hanging Judge, The, *IX,* 231
Health and Mountains, *XXVII,* 160
Heathercat, *XXVIII,* 161
History of Moses, *XXVII,* 197
Victor Hugo's Romances, *V,* 19
Humble Remonstrance, A, *XIII,* 132
Hunter's Family, The, *IV,* 236

Ideal House, The, *XXVII,* 295
Inland Voyage, An, I, 1
Island Nights' Entertainments, XXIII, 1
Isle of Voices, The, *XXIII,* 131

Judge Jeffries, *XXVII,* 345
Juvenilia, XXVII, 195

Kidnapped, XI, 1
Knox, John, and the Almoner of the Galley, *XXVII,* 347
Knox, John, and his Relations to Women, *V,* 231

Lantern-Bearers, The, *XIII,* 175
Lay Morals, *II,* 155

Letter to a Young Gentleman who Proposes to Embrace the Career of Art, *XXVII*, 3
Letters, XXIX-XXXII
Letters from the South Seas, XX, 351
Letters to the Times, Athenæum, Pall Mall Gazette, XXVI, 73
Lodging for the Night, A, *III*, 235

Macaire, *IX*, 191
Manse, The, *XIII*, 59
Markheim, *XII*, 101
Marquesas, The, *XX*, 1
Master of Ballantrae, The, XVIII, 1
Memoir of Fleeming Jenkin, XVI, 1
Memoirs of an Islet, *XIII*, 66
Memoirs of Himself, XIII, 269
Memoirs and Portraits, XIII, 1
Merry Men, The, XII, 1
Misadventures of John Nicholson, The, *XXIII*, 159
Modern Student Considered Generally, The, *XXVII*, 240
Monterey, *IV*, 147
Moral Emblems, XIV, 175
Morality of the Profession of Letters, The, *XXVII*, 54
Mountain Town in France, A, *I*, 153
Mr. Baskerville and his Ward, *XXIV*, 253

New Arabian Nights, III, 1
New Poems, XV, 87
Night in France, A, *XXVII*, 329
"Noctes Ambrosianæ," *V*, 340
Note at Sea, A, *XXVII*, 331
Notes on the Movements of Young Children, *XXVII*, 301
Note on Realism, A, *XXVII*, 73
Nuits Blanches, *XXVII*, 310
Nurses, *XXVII*, 318

Olalla, *XII*, 141
Old and New Pacific Capitals, The, *IV*, 145
Old Mortality, *XIII*, 24
Old Scots Gardener, An, *XIII*, 44
On the Choice of a Profession, *XXVII*, 12
On the Enjoyment of Unpleasant Places, *XXVII*, 177
On Falling in Love, *II*, 27
On Lord Lytton's Fables in Song, *V*, 279
On Morality, *II*, 202
On a New Form of Intermittent Light for Lighthouses, *XXVII*, 265
On Some Technical Elements of Style in Literature, *XXVII*, 35
On the Thermal Influence of Forests, *XXVII*, 269
Ordered South, *II*, 70
Osbourne, Prefaces by Lloyd, Vols. *I, III, IV, V, VI, VII, IX, X, XIX, XXI, XXIV, XXVII, XXVIII*
Owl, The, *XXIV*, 235

Pan's Pipes, *II*, 140
Pastoral, *XIII*, 51
Paumotus, The, *XX*, 127
Pavilion on the Links, The, *III*, 171
Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured, A, *XIII*, 114
Pentland Rising, The, *XXVII*, 211
Pepys, Samuel, *V*, 207
Philosophy of Nomenclature, The, *XXVII*, 259
Philosophy of Umbrellas, The, *XXVII*, 254
Plains of Nebraska, The, *IV*, 120

Plays, IX
Plea for Gas Lamps, A, *II*, 144
"Poets and Poetry of Scotland, The," *V*, 330
Popular Authors, *XXVII*, 21
Prayers, XXVI, 1
Preface by Way of Criticism, *V*, 5
Prince Otto, VII, 1
Protest on Behalf of Boer Independence, *XXVII*, 532
Providence and the Guitar, *III*, 287
Pulvis et Umbra, *XIII*, 199

"Quiet Corner in England, A," *V*, 311

Rajah's Diamond, The, III, 86
Random Memories, *XIII*, 159
Records of a Family of Engineers, *XVI*, 163
Reflections and Remarks on Human Life, *II*, 213
Retrospect, A, *XXVII*, 285
Reviews of "Shamrock and Rose," "Kilcorran," "Mottiscliffe," "Against Her Will," *V*, 356
Roads, *XXVII*, 186
Rosa Quo Locorum, XIII, 237

Salvini's "Macbeth," *V*, 289
San Francisco, *IV*, 166
Satirist, The, *XXVII*, 307
Scientific Papers, *XXVII*, 263
"Scottish Rivers," *V*, 307
Sea Fogs, The, *IV*, 246
Selections from his Note Book, *XIII*, 297
Service of the Northern Lights, The, *XVI*, 199
Silverado Diary, The, IV, 287
Silverado Squatters, The, IV, 177
Sire de Malétroit's Door, The, *III*, 261
Sketches, *XXVII*, 283
Some Aspects of Robert Burns, *V*, 43
Some College Memories, *XIII*, 17
Some Gentlemen in Fiction, *XXVII*, 80
Some Portraits by Raeburn, *II*, 110
Songs of Travel, XIV, 135
South Seas, In the, XX, 1
St. Ives, XXV, 1
Starry Drive, A, *IV*, 258
Sterne, Laurence, *XXVII*, 342
Stevenson at Play, War Correspondence from Stevenson's Note-Book, *XXVII*, 353
Stevenson, Prefaces by Mrs. R. L., *I, III, IV, VI, VII, VIII, X, XI, XII, XIV, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXV, XXVI*
Stevenson, Thomas, *XIII*, 73
Stimulation of the Alps, The, *XXVII*, 173
Story of a Recluse, The, *XXIV*, 187
Story of a Lie, The, *X*, 165
Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, X, 5
Suicide Club, The, *III*, 3
Surname of Stevenson, The, *XVI*, 165

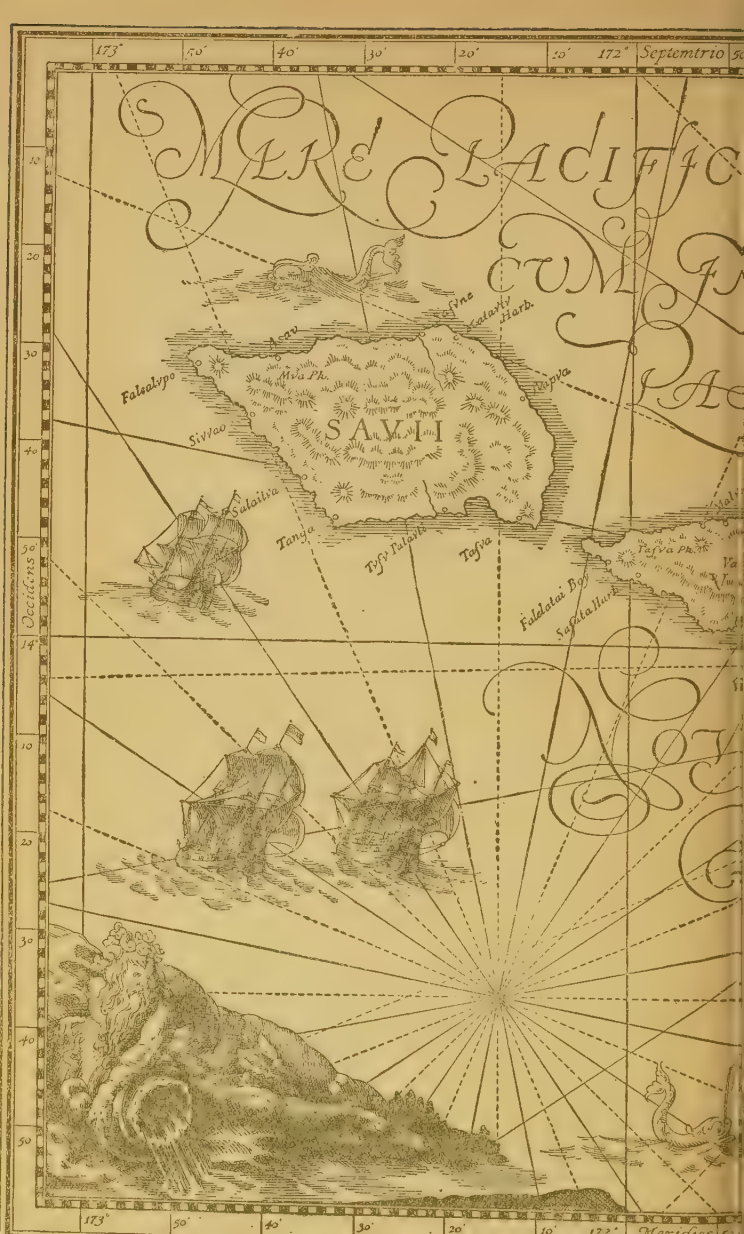
Talk and Talkers, *XIII*, 79, 92
Thoreau, Henry David, *V*, 102
Thrawn, Janet, *XII*, 125
To the Golden Gates, *IV*, 140
Toils and Pleasures, *IV*, 274
Toll House, The, *IV*, 253
Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes, I, 145
Treasure of Franchard, The, *XII*, 197
Treasure Island, VI, 1
Truth of Intercourse, *II*, 37
Tutuila, *XXVI*, 47

Underwoods, XIV, 57

Valley, In the, *IV,* 186
Vailima Papers, XXVI, 1
Verne's Stories, Jules, *V,* 335
Villon, François, *V,* 143
Virginibus Puerisque, II, 1

Waif Woman, The, *X,* 141
Walking Tours, *II,* 131
Weir of Hermiston, XXVIII, 1
Wellington, *XXVII,* 323
When the Devil Was Well, *X,* 237
Whitman, Walt, *V,* 77
Will o' the Mill, *XII,* 65
Winter's Walk in Carrick and Galloway, A, *XXVII,* 124
With the Children of Israel, *IV,* 206
"Works of Edgar Allan Poe, The," *V,* 322
Wreath of Immortelles, The, *XXVII,* 313
Wrecker, The, XXI, 1
Wrong Box, The, XIX, 1

Yoshida-Torajiro, *V,* 135
Young Chevalier, The, *XXVIII,* 193



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